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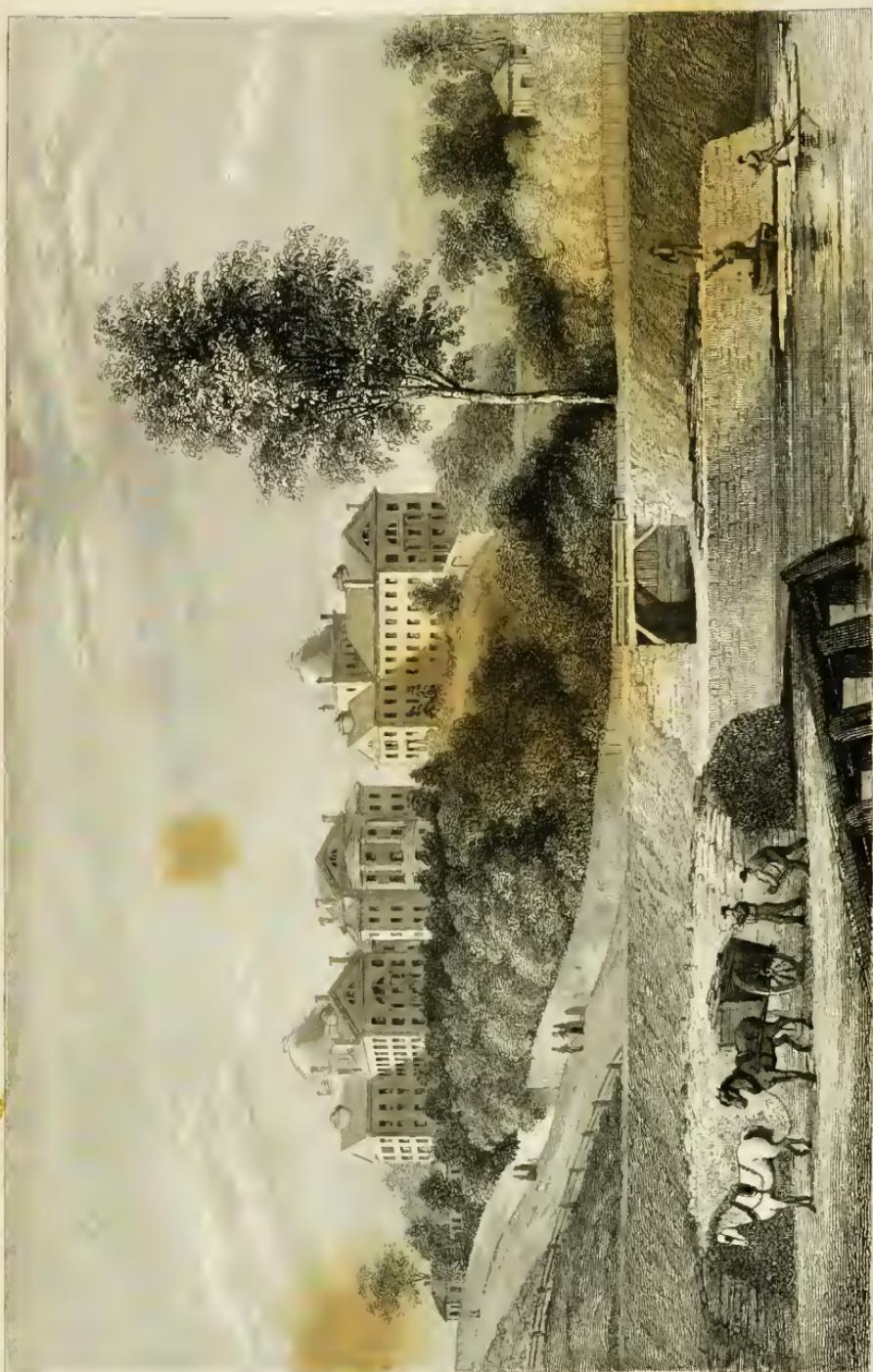












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# REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS

GENERAL HOSPITAL,

PRESENTED TO THE CORPORATION,

AT THEIR ANNUAL MEETING,

JANUARY 26, 1848.

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BOSTON:

PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON, 21, SCHOOL-STREET.

1848.



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THE Committee appointed to examine the accounts of the Treasurer of the Massachusetts General Hospital, and to prepare a Report on the state of the institution, have attended to that duty, and present the following Report: —

The last Annual Report mentioned the fact, that the late Mr. John Redman had made this institution his residuary legatee. His executor, Thomas A. Goddard, Esq. has, during the past year, been actively engaged in settling the estate; and, though nothing has yet been paid over, the Committee are assured that the final balance, receivable by the Corporation under this bequest, will probably be *one hundred thousand dollars*. As the legacy of a Boston mechanic, this will ever be a truly memorable instance of munificence; while its amount

entitles the donor to be ranked among the very first benefactors of this institution.

Within the past year, Mr. William Oliver, of Dorchester, formerly a merchant of this city, bequeathed to the institution one moiety of his estate, subject to certain life interests therein given to his two sisters. The eventual amount of this bequest will be nearly *fifty thousand dollars*. This legacy has been gratefully accepted by the Trustees, who have tendered to the representatives and family of the deceased their acknowledgments for his bounty.

With no less gratitude have the Trustees acknowledged another legacy, of an especially interesting character, received within this period. Miss Sarah Clough (for many years a valued and confidential domestic in the family of Joseph W. Revere, Esq. of this city) bequeathed to this institution the residue of her property, the little savings of her own personal labors. The amount which has been paid to the Treasurer, pursuant to this bequest, is \$599.84. There never has been a donation to the Hospital, since its foundation,—whatever its magnitude,—more honorable either to the donor or to the institution. These new evidences of sympathy and approval cannot fail to stimulate us all to continued and renewed exertions in the discharge of the public trusts confided to us.

The Committee have examined the accounts of Henry Andrews, Esq. the Treasurer, and find the same correctly cast and well vouched. They have also examined the evidences of all the property in his possession, as exhibited in the accompanying Schedule; by which it appears, that the balance in cash in his hands, on January 1, 1848,

was \$2,555.85, and that the whole invested property of the Corporation, real and personal, including said balance, was \$168,092.88.

The cost of the Hospital and Grounds in Boston, to that date, is \$249,572.38; and the cost of the M'Lean Asylum for the Insane at Somerville, \$246,850.98; as also appears by the accounts of the Treasurer. Besides these invested funds and these two estates, it will be remembered that there will ultimately be receivable, under the will of the late John Parker, Esq. the sum of \$10,000, in addition to what may be realized from the bequests of Mr. Redman and Mr. Oliver, before referred to, and from any provisions, in favor of this Corporation, contained in the charters of the various Life Insurance Companies of this commonwealth. It will also be remembered, that "The Province House Estate," the noble gift of the commonwealth, which was leased in 1817 for ninety-nine years, and is therefore of little present value, will revert to this institution in A.D. 1916.

The accounts and reports prepared by the Superintendent of the Hospital in Boston are herewith submitted, which contain several interesting details. The current expenses of this department of the institution have, during the past year, required the payment from our general funds of \$20,710.25; being \$1,898.38 more than in the year 1846, and \$7,785.80 more than in the year 1845. The whole number of patients who have been under treatment during the year was 741,\* of whom 340 have recovered, and 57 died. There remained in the Hospital, Dec. 31, 1847, — 114. The entire number of patients

\* Sixty-seven being in the house, Jan. 1, 1847; and 674 being received during the year.

received from the opening of the institution (Sept. 1, 1821) to this time is eleven thousand one hundred and thirteen.

The condition of the Hospital in Boston was never, at any former period, more entirely satisfactory. The extensive improvements which were projected a few years since, and which the munificence of the public alone rendered practicable, are now entirely completed. Two new wings have been erected, of which the one last finished was opened for the reception of patients during the past summer. In these wings are four wards, each about fifty feet square. Upon entering one of these apartments, the visiter sees a floor beautifully polished, walls and ceilings of great simplicity and elegance, and twenty neat iron bedsteads, arranged around at regular intervals, with their clean coverings and curtains. The ventilation is excellent, and the air in these wards is generally as pure as could be desired. The old wings have also been entirely remodelled, chiefly for the purpose of introducing the same satisfactory system of ventilation. An entirely distinct brick building, of large size, has been erected, designed for all the domestic operations of cooking, washing, ironing, &c.; and containing excellent cellars, store-rooms, &c. The most exact and particular housekeeper may well look with admiration upon the various details of the very perfect arrangements of this building. It is connected with the main edifice by a covered passage-way; and, by means of dumb-waiters, articles sent from the kitchen are speedily distributed throughout the different wards. A new entrance has been made into the Hospital yard, and a new avenue laid out. Nothing is wanting, except a brick wall or

iron railing to enclose the grounds. To this object, as being one of mere ornament, the Trustees have not felt justified in applying the funds of the institution. There is, however, reason to believe, that, at no very distant day, the present unsightly fence may give place to one of a more durable material and elegant design.

These improvements enable us to accommodate 141, or, if need be, 150 patients, instead of 60; or, in other words, have nearly trebled our means of usefulness. They have been executed under the superintendence of George M. Dexter, Esq. one of the Trustees, upon whose taste and skill as an architect they reflect the highest credit. The expense attending these measures has been very great—much greater than was at first estimated. This, indeed, is partly owing to the fact, that so much more has been done than was originally contemplated by the Trustees; the whole institution having been, as it were, renovated. The total cost has been \$103,276, besides \$20,000 called for, but not yet paid,—making \$123,276, and being double the whole amount of the public subscription of 1844.\* Fortunately it has not been found necessary to sell any of the permanently invested stocks of the institution; there having been received from the Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company, since these improvements were undertaken, three annual dividends of \$9,000 each, and one extra dividend of \$24,000, making in all no less a sum than \$51,000. The result, however, has been the reduction of those funds, the income of which was important to

\* The sum of \$62,550 was subscribed by two hundred persons in six sums of \$2,000, nineteen of \$1,000, thirty-three of \$500, three of \$300, six of \$250, fourteen of \$200, seventy-eight of \$100, two of \$75, thirty-seven of \$50, and two of \$25.

meet the increased current expenses of the institution, which will henceforth involve the support of twice our former number of free beds. The receipts during the past year from individual subscriptions (\$3,100) and from funds, the income of which is specially appropriated to this object (viz. the donation of Hon. David Sears, and the legacies of the Messrs. Phillips and Belknap, and of the late Misses Tucker and Brimmer), were sufficient only for the maintenance of forty-one free beds. To this increase of the number of free beds, the Trustees feel pledged by their circular, issued in 1844, asking for subscriptions. Any annual deficiency which might otherwise occur will, however, we trust, be obviated by the aid of an increased number of annual contributors. We doubt, indeed, if it is possible for any one to do more good in a year with the sum of a hundred dollars, than by devoting it to the maintenance of a free bed in the Hospital.

That this enlargement of our buildings had become necessary seems proved by the fact, that, of the eighty free beds, all except *three* were actually occupied on the first of January, 1848; and it should be remembered, that *two* are, as far as possible, always reserved for cases of sudden accident; such cases, by a fundamental rule of the institution, being admissible without any previous permit.

A large amount of relief is administered to out-door patients. This class has, however, of course diminished since the opening of the new wings; many of them being doubtless now admitted as inmates. This increase of our establishment has rendered it necessary to double the former number of physicians and surgeons; the present number being twelve. The labors and responsibility of

Capt. Girdler, the superintendent, have also been greatly increased. For this reason, and because his duties have always been performed in a manner so uniformly acceptable to all connected with the institution, the Trustees recently voted to enlarge his salary by an annual grant of \$500. The neatness, taste, vigilance, and kindness of Mrs. Girdler have caused the Trustees to entertain an equally high sense of the value of her services as matron. There has, indeed, been a general disposition manifested on the part of all the resident officers, attendants, and nurses, to treat the patients with that attention, tenderness, and consideration, which is their due. Any charge of failure or omission in this respect would be sure to receive from this Board the most prompt notice and the strictest investigation.

To Dr. William H. Thayer, our admitting physician, the Trustees are indebted for a folio volume, just completed, which forms a most valuable index to the hundred and twenty-six volumes of *medical* reports of cases in the Hospital. It contains, classified under the head of each separate disease (260 in number), all the cases which have been treated from 1821 to 1845, with the result of the treatment, and a reference to the book and page where the details of each case may be found. We trust that he will proceed to render equally accessible the records of the *surgical* department of the Hospital.

A small sum has been appropriated for the formation of a Medical Library, to consist of books of reference, for the use of the physicians and surgeons; and an annual appropriation will probably be continued for this object.

It is hoped, that, with these various "means and appliances" at command, the institution has hitherto

accomplished, and will ever continue to accomplish, the designs of its founders and benefactors. In one striking instance, it certainly has not been found wanting. The past year has tested the unspeakable importance of the recent discovery of the properties of *Sulphuric Ether*; no less than 132 operations,\* many of them of much severity, having been already performed with entire success on patients who had been rendered insensible through its benign influence. By overcoming all muscular and nervous resistance, it has extended the domain of surgery; making operations possible which could not have been performed, and which would not have been attempted, without its aid; and, by the removal of the fear of pain, it has greatly increased the actual number of operations. It has already become an established remedy throughout all the chief cities of Europe, and its benefits have reached even the distant natives of Singapore and of Canton.

With just pride, therefore, the Trustees would now record the fact, that within the walls of this building were witnessed the first painless capital operations that were ever performed. The world at large, indeed, is in no small degree indebted to the medical and surgical officers of this institution. But for their immediate appreciation of the importance of this discovery, and their considerate, but, at the same time, zealous and prompt co-operation with Dr. Morton, in availing themselves of its use, its

\* Dr. Ralph K. Jones, one of the house physicians, politely copied for the use of the Committee a list of all these 132 cases (prepared by Dr. Dalton, one of the house surgeons, for a different purpose). This list specifies the name of each patient, the nature of the operation, and its result. At the end is a tabular summary; showing that, of the patients thus operated upon, there were discharged well, 75; much relieved, 15; relieved, 5; not relieved, 7; dead, 8; uncertain, 2; — the number remaining under treatment being 20.

application might have been restricted to the comparatively unimportant operations of the dentist. Who can say what might have been the result, had his overtures been received with excessive caution? An answer may perhaps be found in the fact, that it is only within a few weeks, *if at all*, that the use of sulphuric ether has been introduced into our sister institution in Pennsylvania. This appears by "the Annual Report on Surgery read before the College of Physicians, Nov. 2, 1847, by Isaac Parish, M.D." where it is said: — "*At the Pennsylvania Hospital in this city, it has not been tried at all* ; being considered by the judicious surgeons of that institution as a remedy of doubtful safety, or, at least, as not sufficiently established to warrant them in its employment." And yet, in the same Report, we find the following sentence: — "But, when we extend our vision to foreign countries, and call to mind that during the past nine months it has been adopted in most of the large hospitals of Great Britain, — in the vast hospitals of Paris, and, for the last six months, in the numerous institutions of like character in Germany, including the immense hospitals at Vienna and Berlin, we can form some idea of the extent to which it has been carried, and of the firm hold which this great American discovery has taken of the mind of the scientific world."

The first operators who applied it were Drs. John C. Warren, and George Hayward, surgeons of this Hospital. The enthusiasm of one of their colleagues,\* who had been especially earnest in urging the performance of

\* Dr. Henry J. Bigelow, who, on November 9, 1846, read a paper before the Boston Society for Medical Improvement, suggesting most of the important uses (obstetric excepted) to which ether has since been successfully applied.

these operations, led him to become the first champion of ether in this country, by a publication of much merit; and also to transmit the earliest account of the discovery to England, where it was at once hailed with rapturous exultation. And another,\* a favorite alike of Science and the Muses, has thus vividly described its beneficent effects: — “The knife is searching for disease, — the pulleys are dragging back dislocated limbs, — nature herself is working out the primal curse, which doomed the tenderest of her creatures to the sharpest of her trials; but the fierce extremity of suffering has been steeped in the waters of forgetfulness, and the deepest furrow in the knotted brow of agony has been smoothed for ever.” Even the grave and dispassionate Dr. Warren himself (in a yet unpublished work, which he kindly communicated to the Committee, and which embodies the matured results of his own experience upon this subject) indulges in equally graphic language: — “Who could have imagined, that drawing the knife over the delicate skin of the face might produce a sensation of unmixed delight! — that the turning and twisting of instruments in the most sensitive bladder might be accompanied by a beautiful dream!” †

Professor Simpson, of Edinburgh, has discovered that a new agent (chloroform ‡) possesses the same powers as

\* Dr. Oliver W. Holmes. See his “Introductory Lecture, delivered before the Medical Class of Harvard University, Nov. 3, 1847.”

† “Etherization, with Surgical Remarks, by John C. Warren, M.D. Boston, 1848.” This work, now published, is courteously dedicated to the President and other officers of this Corporation by name.

‡ In a communication by Dr. Henry J. Bigelow to the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, dated Dec. 4, 1846, occurs the following sentence, which is interesting as containing a distinct anticipation of the discovery of some new agent: — “And even when future science shall have abridged and improved

sulphuric ether, and, as he thinks, many and great advantages over it. The universal law of intellect is progress. But, though others may erect the superstructure, the corner-stone of the building will preserve an imperishable record of its founder. The name of Fulton will never be forgotten. Yet how vast is the difference between the first humble steamboat that slowly toiled up the Hudson, and those majestic structures which now defy the storms of the Atlantic!

As philanthropists, we may well rejoice that we have had any agency, however slight, in conferring on poor, suffering humanity, so precious a gift. Unrestrained and free as God's own sunshine, it has gone forth to cheer and gladden the earth. It will awaken the gratitude of the present and of all coming generations. The student who, from distant lands, or in distant ages, may visit this spot, will view it with increased interest, as he remembers that here was first demonstrated one of the most glorious truths of science.

Pursuant to an informal suggestion of the Board, who regard this discovery as the most important event which has occurred in the history of this institution, the Committee proceed to make a more extended investigation, in respect to its origin, than would otherwise have been thought necessary.

A recent publication, by Dr. George Hayward, entitled "Some account of the first use of Sulphuric Ether by Inhalation in Surgical Practice," gives a clear and simple history of this discovery, and of all its attending circum-

the present method, or substituted another for it, it will not detract in the slightest degree from the merit of the original discoverers of a great and novel principle."

stances, *as connected with the Hospital.* It is interesting to trace the earlier successive steps by which the grand result was at last obtained. These are, to a considerable extent, recapitulated in the British and Foreign Review of April last. It is there stated, that, as early as 1779, "we find many experiments on men and animals on the inspiration of different kinds of airs." — "Dr. Beddoes, in his work on Factitious Airs, published at Bristol in 1795-6," "gives several communications from Dr. Pearson on the inhalation of ether," also "a letter from one of Dr. Thornton's patients, in which the patient himself gives an account of the inhalation of ether, by Dr. Thornton's advice, and its effects in a case of pectoral catarrh. He says, 'It gave almost immediate relief both to the oppression and pain in the chest.' On a second trial, he says he inhaled two tea-spoonfuls of ether, which, he adds, 'gave immediate relief as before, and *I very soon after fell asleep*, and had a good night's rest.' — "Another curious case is given by Dr. Thornton, in which inhalation was prescribed for the relief of a very *painful inflammatory affection of the mamma*, and with very beneficial effect." The Reviewer says, "At this time, and subsequently, Dr. Thornton was in the common habit of administering the vapor of ether to his patients." — "In all these trials, no one had distinctly in view the removal or abolition of pain, though this was attained, indirectly, in Dr. Thornton's case. But Sir Humphrey Davy, who, it is well known, first began his chemical career by assisting Dr. Beddoes," "seems not only to have contemplated such a result by means of medicamentous inhalation, but to have actually put it to the test of experiment on himself. The medium of his experiment, however, was not ether,

but the nitrous oxide. Sir Humphrey tells us, that on two occasions the inhalation of the nitrous oxide removed headache. He also tried its effect *in removing intense physical pain*, while he was cutting a wisdom-tooth." "He says: '*As nitrous oxide, in its extensive operation, appears capable of destroying physical pain, it may probably be used with advantage during surgical operations in which no great effusion of blood takes place.*' — "In the article 'Ether,' in the Dict. des Sc. Med. vol. xiii. published in 1815, we find the author, Nysten, speaking of the inhalation of *ether* as familiarly known, and as employed for the relief of some pulmonary diseases, and also for *mitigating the pain of colic*." — To an eminent medical friend, the Committee are indebted for the fact, that, in Pereira's Materia Medica, published in London in 1839, it is expressly stated that "*the vapor of ether is inhaled in spasmodic asthma, chronic catarrh, and dyspnoea, hooping cough, and to relieve the effects caused by the accidental inhalation of chlorine gas.*" Dr. Charles T. Jackson, of this city (as we learn from a pamphlet published in 1847, under his own sanction and authority, entitled, "Discovery by Charles T. Jackson, M.D. of the applicability of Sulphuric Ether in Surgical Operations; by Martin Gay, M.D."), has distinctly admitted, that he "was early impressed with the remarks of Davy\*" concerning the remedial agency of gaseous matters."† As a learned chemist, he was also doubtless familiar with the publication last referred to. Accordingly, two or

\* Dr. Jackson, in a letter published with Dr. Gay's pamphlet, says, "My interest in the respiration of gases was first excited by Sir H. Davy's experiments; and, since I became acquainted with them, the subject has always seemed to me to deserve further investigation."

† Daily Advertiser of March 1, 1847.

three years after its appearance, or in the winter of 1841-2, "he inhaled sulphuric ether, to obtain relief from the very unpleasant sensations caused by an accidental inhalation of chlorine gas." In other words, having accidentally inhaled chlorine gas, he resorted to the prescribed remedy. "He at first breathed the ether without producing unconsciousness, but derived from it some relief. Afterwards, still suffering from the chlorine, he continued the experiment to such an extent as to produce complete general insensibility." Subsequently, under precisely the same circumstances, he also prescribed it to one of his students. He had, as he states, on one previous occasion, also about A.D. 1841, inhaled it with safety to the extent of producing "a peculiar sleep or unconsciousness." — "*Before his observations, a state of complete insensibility, from this cause, was considered by the best authorities as one of greater or less danger; and it had been known to produce fatal results. Young persons had breathed this vapor to the extent of producing unconsciousness, and in some cases without injury.*"

Dr. Jackson, then, had not discovered any new power or property of ether. *It was known that it could produce insensibility; and that that insensibility, though sometimes fatal, was sometimes unattended with injury.* It was also known as a specific against the noxious effects of chlorine gas. He had merely tested these known propositions, and found them true in his own person. By so doing, he had formed, as he states, a strong opinion, that pure, rectified, sulphuric ether could be inhaled with safety. But its efficacy for the prevention of pain he had, thus far, only verified by actual experi-

ment in the case specified in the text-books, viz. *where chlorine gas had been previously inhaled*. This experiment is stated in Dr. Gay's pamphlet with great particularity, *as if it had been one before unknown*. The motives which led to it, and the philosophical inferences deduced by Dr. Jackson, are set forth with much minuteness. It seems indeed to be relied on as the very foundation of Dr. Jackson's claim, as the discoverer of the safety and efficacy of sulphuric ether. *It still obviously remained to be proved*, that it could be safely and effectually inhaled for the prevention of pain under other circumstances.\* To establish this point, Dr. Jackson never attempted an experiment on man or animal. It is true that "he communicated to several persons (and, among others, to Mr. Bemis, an eminent dentist, in 1842) his observations and conclusions respecting the prevention of pain in surgical operations;" and, in February, 1846, he informed a student in his laboratory (Mr. Joseph Peabody), who wished to have two teeth extracted, "that insensibility would be produced by the inhalation of sulphuric ether-vapor. He advised him to breathe it, and to submit to the operation, while in the sleep induced thereby." But what effect did his advice have on Mr. Peabody? "He at last gave up the experiment, because his father, a scientific man, feared irritation of the lungs might ensue, — *because the best authorities on the subject were arrayed against the opinion of Dr. Jackson*, — and because he was unwilling to incur any risk for so slight an operation." And such was really

\* Dr. Gay says himself, "It still remained to be ascertained, whether this unconsciousness was so perfect, that, during its continuance, no pain would be produced by wounding instruments." — Pamphlet, p. 10.

the general state of public opinion, among men of science, down to that time.\* *The discovery was yet to be made by one who was willing to try the experiment, notwithstanding the best authorities on the subject were against it.*

Further, it does not appear that, from 1841-2 to 1846, Dr. Jackson suggested its use, except for the slighter and instantaneous operations of the dentist. Familiar, as he confesses himself to have been, with the views of Sir H. Davy, who had so long before suggested the use of the nitrous oxide in operations attended *with little effusion of blood*, it was very natural that Dr. Jackson's thoughts should have been exclusively turned to the use of sulphuric ether in the class of minor operations, which had been thus specified by so distinguished a philosopher. It would seem, indeed, clear that he had not the remotest conception of its universal applicability and importance. Such, indeed, is the only satisfactory explanation of the fact, that, during an interval of nearly five years, he never once tested his discovery, or caused it to be tested, by a single experiment. Upon this point, indeed, the advocate of Dr. Jackson says, "It was more than a quarter of a century after Jenner first heard the milk-maid express her belief in the protective influence of cow-pox, that he vaccinated his first patient;" but, he adds, "*during which period he was much engaged in the investigation of the subject.*" But ether seems to have received only a casual and incidental attention from Dr. Jackson. To make the cases at all parallel, it must be shown, that Jenner, after vaccinating his first patient, waited five years before vaccinating another, *with a like*

\* See Mr. Metcalf's letter to the Committee, p. 22.

*apparent unconsciousness of the importance of his discovery.* Indeed these two discoveries are of so totally opposite a character, that they suggest a striking contrast, instead of a parallel. In the one case, the truth could be ascertained only by repeated experiments and patient investigation. It had to fight its way against the inveterate prejudices of the world. In the other case, it is fully and for ever demonstrated by the first successful capital operation ; and it is at once hailed, as it were, with delight by all mankind.

Within this period, Dr. Horace Wells, of Hartford, used the nitrous oxide while engaged in extracting teeth. His claim, *as a discoverer* in this matter, must yield entirely to that of Sir H. Davy, who, after actual experiments, had, as it were, distinctly suggested the use of this very agent for this object so many years before. There are, doubtless, reasons, founded in the nature of this agent, which have prevented these suggestions of Davy, in regard to it, from having been long since realized. And, whatever may have been the result of Dr. Wells's experiments elsewhere, it is certain that his public performance of them in Boston in 1844 was an entire failure. It is also stated by Dr. Wells, that, as early as November, 1844, "a surgical operation was performed at Dr. Marcy's office under the influence of *sulphuric ether* ;" and he adds, "The doctor then advised me by all means to continue the use of the nitrous oxide." And it seems that the result of this one experiment was such, that, pursuant to this advice, he abandoned the idea of the further use of ether. His claim, therefore, to the discovery in question appears in this view also to be equally unfounded. We cannot but

believe, that it has been without due consideration that his claim has received the official sanction of his native state of Connecticut. Indeed, a published letter from Dr. Wells to Dr. Morton seems necessarily to exclude the idea, that he himself claimed to have made any such prior discovery.\* All must, however, accord to him the honor of having been an earnest and persevering seeker after truth in this very path of inquiry. And his labors and experiments may, we think, fairly be considered as having had some indirect influence, though not themselves attended with direct success.†

Dr. W. T. G. Morton, of this city, must now be mentioned. He had been a student of Dr. Jackson's, and formerly a partner of Dr. Wells. He, therefore, occasionally availed himself of the advice of the former; and he was aware of, and (upon the public occasion in Boston before referred to) had taken part in, the experiments of the latter in the use of nitrous oxide. It does not appear that Dr. Wells had ever mentioned in Boston his one experiment with sulphuric ether. There is evidence, entirely satisfactory, that Dr. Morton's attention had been for some time engaged upon the subject;‡ that

\* The letter referred to is as follows:—

“Hartford, Conn. Oct. 20, 1846.

“Dr. Morton.—Dear Sir, Your letter, dated yesterday, is just received; and I hasten to answer it, for fear you will adopt a method in disposing of your rights, which will defeat your object. Before you make any arrangements whatever, I wish to see you. I think I will be in Boston the first of next week, probably Monday night. *If the operation of administering the gas is not attended with too much trouble, and will produce the effect you state, it will undoubtedly be a fortune to you, provided it is rightly managed.*

“Yours in haste,

II. WELLS.”

† See, accordingly, the letter of Mr. Metcalf, in page 22.

‡ A pamphlet — entitled, “Some Account of the Letheon; or, Who is the Discoverer? by Edward Warren; Boston, 1847” — contains various depositions

he had purchased and experimented upon sulphuric ether; that, as early as July, 1846, a highly intelligent

proving the performance of experiments, &c. by Dr. Morton. Several of the deponents are personally unknown to the Committee; but Thomas R. Spear, jun. is highly spoken of, as a person of veracity, by Hon. John P. Bigelow and Charles Sprague, Esq. two of our most respectable citizens. William P. Leavitt is also spoken of to the Committee, as a credible witness, by Nathaniel G. Snelling, Esq. the well-known president of the late Massachusetts Fire and Marine Insurance Company. Francis Whitman, one of these deponents, has recently died: his truthfulness seems to be unquestionable. Caleb Eddy, Esq. is personally known to one of the Committee as having had the most intimate relations with Dr. Jackson in past years; and the testimony of his son, R. H. Eddy, Esq. which will be hereafter alluded to, is, we think, entitled to the most implicit credit. These two last depositions relate especially to Dr. Jackson's connection with this discovery. Dr. Jackson, indeed, objects to both of these depositions, because the son was interested in the patent, and was therefore a party in the case; and because the father would naturally take the same views as the son in a matter involving his pecuniary interests. There are also depositions of two surgeon-dentists, Grenville G. Hayden and John C. Hardy, with neither of whom, however, are the Committee acquainted. Dr. Hayden formed a connection in business with Dr. Morton in the summer of 1846, and Dr. Hardy was formerly a student with Dr. Morton. The testimony of the latter witness is as follows, *viz.* :— “In the autumn of 1844, I was present, at the request of Dr. W. T. G. Morton, to see a preparation administered for the purpose of preventing pain in extracting a tooth. Dr. Morton at that time expressed great interest and solicitude in these experiments, and also at the same time requested me to assist him in making some further experiments, in case they succeeded.”

It may not perhaps be irrelevant, in this connection, to mention, that Dr. Morton, on May 3, 1845 (as appears by a bookseller's bill of that date, exhibited to the Committee), purchased seven volumes upon surgery, physiology, anatomy, and chemistry; and likewise “Pereira's *Materia Medica*,” — *a work which contains various details of experiments performed upon dogs, &c. with sulphuric ether.* But upon this circumstance the Committee lay no great stress. The testimony of George O. Barnes and of Dr. Keep, published with Dr. Gay's pamphlet, seems to show that Dr. Morton did not realize the importance of admitting any atmospheric air with sulphuric ether, during his early experiments; so that he probably had not, to that time, acquired a thorough knowledge of its properties.

Dr. Hayden's testimony clearly relates, in great part, to experiments performed with certain “ether” bought of Stevens, Brewer, and Co. in August, 1846, and contained in a demijohn. And Leavitt's and Spear's testimony apparently relates wholly to the same “ether.” And, of this “ether,” Whitman says that he told Dr. Morton he knew what it was, — that it was *chloric ether*. From this, Dr. Jackson infers a wish, on the part of the other deponents, to suppress the fact that it was “chloric ether,” and to deceive the public into a belief that it was *sulphuric ether*. From Dr. Hayden's supplementary certificate, appended to analyses of Dr. Gay and Mr. Burnett, it would seem, however, that

chemist of this city had a conversation with him upon its medicinal qualities; \* and that, at this very time, he

he now distinctly alleges it to be *unrectified sulphuric ether*. Further, Whitman's testimony, though it does not state the performance of actual experiments, is, in several particulars, highly confirmatory of Spear's and Leavitt's. And we think, that the remark testified to by Whitman, as made by him on this one occasion to Dr. Morton, in respect to the contents of the demijohn being chloric ether, is a very different thing from a deliberate statement, in his deposition, that the substance really was chloric ether. It seems to the Committee as if he had said, "You are very secret and mysterious in your movements; but I think I have found out what is in the demijohn: I am satisfied that it is chloric ether." Indeed, the whole of this alleged discrepancy is rendered entirely immaterial by Mr. Metcalf's letter, contained in the next note, which proves affirmatively, and beyond all controversy, that Dr. Morton really was acquainted with, and had had in his possession, sulphuric ether before this purchase from Stevens and Co. Further, this argument of Dr. Jackson is very remarkable, when we consider that, in the specification accompanying the patent, he does not, in the statement of his own claims, rely *exclusively* upon the use of *sulphuric ether*. Its terms would probably be broad enough to include chloroform. Dr. Jackson also comments on the omission of Dr. Morton to state at first to Mr. Eddy the fact, that he had ever performed any experiments before his interview with Dr. Jackson, Sept. 30, 1846. This omission, it would seem, however, that Mr. Eddy himself regards as sufficiently accounted for by the circumstances of the case. Dr. Jackson also remarks on the fact, that Leavitt, in his testimony, admits that the purchase from Stephens, Brewer, and Co. was made by him, under Dr. Morton's orders, in the name of another person, as if to be sent into the country. This system of concealment and secrecy may be a subject of regret; but we do not think, that the general credibility of the witness is at all affected by this circumstance. The Committee have preferred, throughout this investigation, to confine themselves entirely to facts proved by third persons; disregarding, as much as possible, all unsupported verbal statements and admissions of either party; as they had reason to believe, that these had been often made when in a state of excitement, or under circumstances rendering the language liable to be misconstrued or misunderstood.

\* Mr. Theodore Metcalf — in a note to Dr. Morton, dated Dec. 20, 1847 — says, "I can only state, that I remember to have met you at Mr. Burnett's store early in the summer of 1846, and to have had a conversation with you in regard to the medicinal qualities of *sulphuric ether*, a quantity of which you were then purchasing. I cannot, as you desire, give the precise date, but know it to have been previous to July 6, as I left Boston on that day for a tour, from which I have but a few weeks returned." Mr. Metcalf also, subsequently, sent the following letter, before referred to in pp. 18, 20: —

"Boston, Jan. 26, 1848.

"Sir, — In answer to your inquiry respecting the nature of my interview with Mr. Morton, I can only add to my note of December 20, that the conversa-

made an arrangement in business, the express object of which was to relieve himself from the immediate duties

tion was commenced by some inquiry on his part, concerning the nature and effects of sulphuric ether, a vial of which he then held in his hand.

"In answer to his several questions, I gave him such information as he could have obtained from any intelligent apothecary at that time, and also related to him some personal experience as to its use as a substitute for the nitrous oxide; adding the then generally received opinion, that its excessive inhalation would produce dangerous, if not fatal consequences. Some reference was made—but whether by Mr. Morton or myself, I cannot remember—to the unsuccessful experiments of his former partner, Mr. Wells, with the nitrous oxide. It was one of those casual conversations which quickly pass from the mind; and it was for the first time recalled to my memory, upon seeing, months after, in a French journal, an account of the anaesthetic effects of ether, the discovery of which was ascribed by the writer to a Boston dentist.

"I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"N. I. Bowditch, Esq."

"THEODORE METCALF."

Mr. Metcalf is the well-known predecessor of Mr. Burnett, and, as an apothecary, has long possessed, in the highest degree, the confidence and respect of the medical profession; and there is no one in the community, whose personal character would give higher authority to any statement of facts distinctly and positively made. *It is therefore certain, that Dr. Morton, months before his interview with Dr. Jackson, purchased sulphuric ether* at the very shop where Dr. Jackson at last advised him to buy some more (pure and rectified), with which the successful experiment was made. And it may be remarked, that the details of the conversation, given by Mr. Metcalf, seem conclusively to show with what intent Dr. Morton was then making his purchase.

The Committee may claim the entire credit of obtaining this most important testimony. Mr. Metcalf, having been absent in Europe, had never been applied to by Dr. Morton, who called upon him only at the express suggestion of the Committee. Besides its direct bearing in the case, it confirms the statement of Dr. Hayden, who had previously testified to the purchase of a small quantity of sulphuric ether at Mr. Burnett's; and not only so, but it seems to prove that Dr. Hayden could not have any motive for misrepresenting the contents of the demijohn, since the point at issue was Dr. Morton's *entire ignorance* of sulphuric ether, not his *greater or less knowledge* of that agent. Dr. Gay, from the omission in the published affidavits of Dr. Morton to state the kind of ether used in his experiments, infers his total ignorance of *sulphuric ether*, down to Sept. 30, 1846. Indeed, Dr. Jackson stated to one of the Committee, that, when Dr. Morton had his interview with him on Sept. 30, 1846, he (Dr. Morton) had never seen sulphuric ether—did not even know it by sight—was wholly ignorant about its nature and qualities—and got from him, for the first time, the idea of using it. To the suggestion that this ignorance was feigned, he replied that he knew it to be real; and remarked, "The Committee may consider it as a *certain fact* in the case. It can be proved beyond all reasonable doubt

of his profession, in order to devote himself to something which would make an entire revolution in dentistry.\* But we do not think it at all material to go into the minute details of this evidence. Skilful in his par-

whatever." — The Committee, being aware of Mr. Metcalf's statement, suggested that an unimpeachable witness had stated that, three months before that interview, Dr. Morton had bought sulphuric ether, and conversed with him respecting its medicinal qualities. Dr. Jackson replied that it could not be, — that it must be an entire mistake, &c. The Committee learned, two days afterwards, from Mr. Metcalf, that he had himself previously informed Dr. Jackson of the fact, that, *before he went to Europe*, he had seen Dr. Morton buying sulphuric ether, and conversed with him about its qualities. He had not, indeed, stated to Dr. Jackson the precise time when this interview took place; but the Committee think, that this circumstance affords evidence that Dr. Jackson's conclusions in this case have been formed without a careful and deliberate consideration of the facts, even *when brought directly within his notice*.

\* To Richard H. Dana, Jun. Esq. the well-known author of "Two Years before the Mast," the Committee are indebted for the following letter, and the enclosed note from his kinsman Francis Dana, Jun. M.D. a surgeon-dentist of this city, and formerly house-physician of this institution: —

"30, Court-street, Jan. 8, 1848.

"My dear Sir, — On the 30th June, 1846, Dr. W. T. G. Morton came to my office, in company with Dr. G. G. Hayden, to have a contract drawn, the object of which was to provide, that Dr. Hayden should take the entire charge of Dr. Morton's business for a time, in order that Dr. M. might be able to give his attention to something else. Dr. Morton did not state what it was that he was engaged upon; but my impression, founded on my own recollection alone, is very strong, that he said it was something of great importance, which, if successful, would revolutionize the practice of dentistry. I am entirely confirmed in this impression by Dr. F. Dana, whose note on the subject I enclose. It was agreed that I should keep the instrument, and I have it now before me. It bears date June 30, 1846, and was to take effect the next day. The charge in my account-books for drawing the contract is of the same date.

"Truly your friend and servant,

"Nathaniel I. Bowditch, Esq."

"RICHD. H. DANA, Jun."

*Note enclosed in the preceding.* — "To R. H. Dana, Jun. — Dear Sir, During the summer of 1846, in the course of a conversation on the subject of dentistry, you mentioned to me that Dr. Morton had told you he was engaged upon something of great consequence, which would revolutionize the practice of dentistry. This conversation was during the extreme hot weather of that summer, a long time before the discovery of the effect of ether, in producing insensibility during operations, was announced; I should say, so well as I can judge, between two and three months.

"Jan. 10, 1848."

"FRAS. DANA, Jun."

ticular department, he makes no pretensions to general science. Seeking for this discovery,—acquainted with this very agent,—he calls upon Dr. Jackson; wishing, without betraying his own motives and objects, to obtain all the information which Dr. Jackson's extensive researches and experience might enable him to furnish. Dr. Jackson, at this interview, voluntarily gives him the strongest assurances of the expediency and safety of using pure rectified sulphuric ether; informs him where he can get some of a good quality;\* and advises him, as he had more than once advised others, to try the experiment.† Unlike others, Dr. Morton determines to

\* Viz. at Mr. Burnett's shop, where Dr. Morton had himself purchased sulphuric ether three months before.

† In a memorial dated July 31, 1847, transmitted by Dr. Morton to the French Academy, and, as he informs the Committee, subsequently presented by Arago to that body, we find, accordingly, the following paragraph:—“I am ready to acknowledge my indebtedness to men and to books for all my information upon this subject. I have got here a little, and there a little. I learned from Dr. Jackson, in 1844, the effect of ether, directly applied to a sensitive tooth; and proved by experiment, that it would gradually render the nerve insensible. I learned from Dr. Jackson, also in 1844, the effect of ether when inhaled by students at college, which was corroborated by Spear's account, and by what I read. I knew of Dr. Wells's attempt to apply nitrous oxide gas for destroying pain under surgical operations. I had great motive to destroy or alleviate pain under my operations, and endeavored to produce such a result by means of inhaling ether; inferring that, if it would render a nerve insensible when directly applied, it might, when inhaled, destroy or greatly alleviate sensibility to pain generally. Had the ether that I tried on the 5th August been pure, I should have made the demonstration then. I further acknowledge, that I was subsequently indebted to Dr. Jackson for valuable information as to the kinds and preparations of ether, and for the recommendation of the highly rectified, from Burnett's, as the most safe and efficient. But my obligation to him hath this extent, no further.”

In this memorial, we find also the following paragraph:—“I went to Dr. Jackson, therefore, to procure a gas bag, also with the intention of ascertaining something more accurately as to the different preparations of ether, if I should find I could do so without setting him upon the same track of experiment with myself. I am aware, that, by this admission, I may show myself not to have been possessed by the most disinterested spirit of philosophic enthusiasm, clear of all regard for personal rights or benefits: but it is enough for me to say, that

do so. He does not yield to any doubt, from the opposite array of authorities. He is willing to take the risk. Accordingly, on Sept. 30, 1846, — after having, as he states, first inhaled it himself, — he finds a patient who consents to permit him to use it, *and extracts a tooth without pain*. It was, of course, at first still uncertain whether the insensibility so satisfactorily obtained during this brief operation would continue through a more prolonged one. Dr. Morton, on the next day, calls on Dr. Jackson, and informs him of his success; and the latter states, that he advised Dr. Morton to get the surgeons of the Hospital to permit its use.\* He does not himself, however, see any of these officers. He is not himself present at any of the early operations.† He fears that Dr. Morton may recklessly do some great mischief. He refuses to give him a written certificate of the safety of the application of ether. He openly and strongly expresses his regret, that he had ever communicated to

I felt I had made sacrifices and run risks for this object; that I believed myself to be close upon it, yet where another, with better opportunities for experimenting, availing himself of my hints and labors, might take the prize from my grasp."

The Committee deem it a very important consideration, in respect to this interview, that the information in question was elicited by the visit of Dr. Morton to Dr. Jackson for a specific purpose, viz. to obtain the means of persuading a patient to submit to an operation, under the idea that it would be unattended with pain; and that it was not disclosed in an interview sought by Dr. Jackson to make trial of it for *his* satisfaction, or to accomplish *his* purposes.

\* Dr. G. G. Hayden, however, in his affidavit, states that, "on the evening of 30th of September, after the first experiment had been made with success, Dr. Morton spoke about going to the Hospital, and using the ether there, and thus bringing out the new discovery;" while a witness of Dr. Jackson's testifies, that "Dr. Morton strongly objected at first to going to the Hospital." He certainly showed no such reluctance *at last*.

† Dr. Jackson was absent from the city when the third operation was performed at the Hospital, and remained absent twelve days; but, besides this expected absence, he had assigned another reason for declining to assist at that operation.

Dr. Morton any information upon the subject.\* Certainly, then, with respect to all these subsequent experiments, Dr. Jackson is free from the least responsibility; and this alike, whether he doubted the safety of the application of ether, or only, as it would seem, the competency of Dr. Morton to administer it safely. In either case, the risk was wholly confined to Dr. Morton, and the surgeons of this Hospital.† Dr. Morton thus follows up his first success; and the great truth is at last made manifest, for which so many a prayer had been breathed in vain ever since man had lived and suffered. *It is demonstrated that ether may be applied with safety, so as to produce insensibility during all surgical operations.*

Upon the whole, then, it seems clear, that to Dr. Morton the world is indebted for this discovery; and that, but for Dr. Jackson's scientific knowledge and sound advice, Dr. Morton would not have made it at that precise time, and might have failed to do so at any time. The one, having a strong conviction of the safety of the agent, has the credit of giving the best possible advice: the other, by nature determined and fearless, makes the

\* More than one witness distinctly remembers, that the expression, "I don't care what he does with it, if he does not drag my name in with it," and others of similar import, were used by Dr. Jackson in relation to Dr. Morton's early experiments, in confirmation and establishment of this discovery. And one of Dr. Jackson's own witnesses, George O. Barnes, in an affidavit published in Dr. Gay's pamphlet, says expressly:—"In fact, he (Dr. Jackson) was sorry that he had communicated his discovery to Morton, and that he had employed him to make those early experiments with the ether. He spoke strongly upon those points."

† These were then, as now, Drs. John C. Warren, George Hayward, Solomon D. Townsend, Henry J. Bigelow, Samuel Parkman, and J. Mason Warren. Dr. Gay argues that Dr. Morton *did* not, and from his ignorance *could* not, run any risk in following the directions originally given by Dr. Jackson. That argument is certainly inapplicable to these subsequent experiments.

first actual application. Between the discoverer and his adviser, there will henceforth ever be an indissoluble, however reluctant, copartnership. In accordance with these general views are the published statements of two of our own officers. One of them, Dr. Hayward, says: "It is understood, that Dr. C. T. Jackson, well known by his great attainments in geology and chemistry, first suggested the use of ether; but to Dr. Morton, I think, must be awarded the credit of being the first who demonstrated, by actual experiment on the human subject, the existence of this wonderful property." The other, Dr. Jacob Bigelow, President of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in an article published in the Medical and Surgical Journal of July 7, 1847, says: — "In the case of Dr. Jackson, if he did make the discovery in 1842, as asserted, or even later, he stands accountable for the mass of human misery which he has permitted his fellow-creatures to undergo, from the time when he made his discovery, to the time when Dr. Morton made his. In charity, we prefer to believe, that, up to the latter period, he had no definite notion of the real power of ether in surgery, having seen no case of its application in that science. The first made partial experiments, and recommended, but did not make, decisive ones. The last took the risk and labor necessary to demonstrate or disprove its efficacy, and, above all, the safety of the process, which, until his time, had been believed to be dangerous to life, on various good authorities, from Dr. Christison to Mr. Peabody."

In view alike of the simplicity of the agent employed, the magnitude of the results attained, and the near approaches so repeatedly made to this discovery, how

applicable are the lines of Milton, to which a friend has called the attention of the Committee !

“ The invention all admired, and each how he  
 To be the inventor missed, so easy it seemed  
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought  
 Impossible.”

It is matter of regret that a noble discovery in science should have been attended with discussions and controversy, involving much bitterness, and, as it seems to us, disingenuousness. Dr. Morton distinctly admits, that his original application to Dr. Jackson was made with a studied concealment of his true object, and an assumed ignorance of the whole subject (as it would seem, even to the extent of asking if ether were a gas \*). The motive of this concealment is explained to have been a fear lest he should otherwise lose the honor of any eventual discovery which he might make. The consequences to Dr. Morton have been, however, that many, relying on the unimpeachable testimony of those present at that interview, have been induced to withhold from him all credit whatever, except that of “ a nurse who administers a new and bold prescription of a physician,”† and to

\* That this degree of ignorance was assumed seems certain from the letter of Mr. Metcalf, page 22, which proves his acquaintance with sulphuric ether three months before. If, however, this ignorance of Dr. Morton were real, and not assumed, though it would detract from the credit awarded to him, it would not strengthen the claims of Dr. Jackson. He had a right to regard the assumed ignorance as genuine.

† This illustration, used by Dr. Gay, seems to the Committee entirely inapplicable. A nurse who refuses to administer even a new and bold prescription may be justly denounced by the attending physician; whereas Dr. Morton was not a student under Dr. Jackson’s orders, and obliged to administer his remedies to one of *his* (Dr. Jackson’s) patients. He was a free agent, who, after receiving the prescription, voluntarily went and sought out a patient who was willing to submit to it.

regard him, throughout this discovery, in the false light of a mere agent of Dr. Jackson. This culpable step has seemed to increase the merit of Dr. Jackson's advice, by rendering it unsolicited information, instead of a mere answer to a direct inquiry. It has itself furnished the only colorable ground for depriving Dr. Morton of the honor of the discovery. Thus fitly has the majesty of truth vindicated itself! On the other hand, Dr. Jackson transmits to Europe, *as a paper which had been read before the American Academy*, a statement of his claims to this discovery; when, *in fact, it had not been so read*; thus communicating it to the world under an official sanction to which it was not as yet entitled. So also, in a communication in the Boston Daily Advertiser of March 1st, Dr. Jackson says he "*was desirous of testing it (the ether) in a capital operation*; and that *Dr. J. C. Warren politely consented to have the trial made*; and its results proved entirely satisfactory, an amputation having been performed under the influence of ethereal vapor, without giving any pain to the patient." Whereas we have two distinct published statements of Dr. Warren, one in reply to a letter of Nov. 30, 1846, in which occurs the following sentence:—"Two or three days after these occurrences (*i.e. the first two operations at the Hospital*), on meeting with Dr. Chas. T. Jackson, distinguished for his philosophical spirit of inquiry, as well as for his geological and chemical science, this gentleman informed me, that he first suggested to Dr. Morton the inspiration of ether, as a means of preventing the pain of operations on the teeth. He did not claim the invention of the apparatus, or its practical application. For these we are indebted to Dr. Morton." The other

statement is as follows: — “Boston, Jan. 6, 1847. I hereby declare and certify, to the best of my knowledge and recollection, that I never heard of the use of sulphuric ether by inhalation, as a means of preventing the pains of surgical operations, until it was suggested by *Dr. W. T. G. Morton*, in the latter part of October, 1846.” If it be said, that neither of the first two operations was a capital one, we have the authority of Dr. Hayward, who performed the second operation,\* for saying, that it was the removal of a very large tumor from the arm, — that it occupied seven minutes, — that, as it involved the painful process of cutting through the skin to a great extent, it was as entirely satisfactory as an amputation would have been, — the patient being free from all sense of pain. One present at the operation exhibited to the Committee a sketch of the arm and the tumor upon it, taken at the time, which clearly showed how formidable an operation it must have been, though not perhaps what would be professionally called a *severe* one. Dr. Warren says expressly in his yet unpublished work, “The patient exhibited no sign of physical or intellectual suffering.” *And yet it was not until after this operation, that Dr. Warren or Dr. Hayward had received an intimation, that Dr. Jackson had any thing to do with the discovery, either from himself or any one else.* The third operation was a capital one, and it was entirely successful. Alice Mohan, a young woman of twenty years of age (who had long been a patient in our insti-

\* The first operation, the removal of a tumor from the neck, was performed by Dr. Warren, who says that it was a case of imperfect etherization. It was performed Oct. 16, 1846. The second operation took place Oct. 17th, and the third on Nov. 6th.

tution, and who is doubtless well remembered by all this Board, to whose kind consideration her character and conduct, no less than her misfortunes, so well entitled her), was to submit to amputation above the knee. But if Dr. Jackson's statement is to be understood as applying only to this case, we still find that every part of the statement is entirely irreconcileable with the facts. This operation was performed, not by Dr. Warren, but by Dr. Hayward. And not only was Dr. Hayward still entirely ignorant of Dr. Jackson's participation in this discovery; but the dialogue which actually had taken place between Dr. Warren and Dr. Jackson, in relation to it, was to this effect. Dr. Warren, on being informed by Dr. Jackson that he first suggested to Dr. Morton the use of sulphuric ether, *requested Dr. Jackson to come to the Hospital, and administer it* during this operation, which was to take place the next Saturday. *Dr. Jackson declined doing so*, for two reasons;—one, that he was going out of town; the other, that he could not do so, consistently with his arrangements with Dr. Morton. Dr. Warren has not given to the Committee any information respecting this conversation; but that such was the substance of the dialogue is capable of judicial proof from other evidence which has been laid before the Committee. So that, if Dr. Jackson at any time requested of Dr. Warren to have the ether administered during a capital operation at the Hospital, it must have been after this conversation, in which he declined to administer it, and after it had been successfully applied by another without his assistance.

This withholding of all credit from Dr. Morton has but caused Dr. Jackson's own claims to be the more strictly

scrutinized. Had he been willing to admit that the discovery was a joint one, the world would probably have allowed to him, as a truly scientific man, the largest share of the honors resulting from it. The exclusive claims of Dr. Jackson seem to rest wholly upon the hypothesis, that Dr. Morton was, from first to last, his mere agent; — an idea evidently repudiated by Dr. Morton, when he first went to Dr. Warren, *without even naming Dr. Jackson*; and most openly and unequivocally disavowed by Dr. Jackson himself, during the whole series of Dr. Morton's experiments. The Committee think that Dr. Jackson's own early acts have, indeed, for ever rendered inadmissible these exclusive claims. He at first agreed to receive from Dr. Morton the sum of \$500, as a compensation for his services. Is it, for one moment, conceivable that the true discoverer would have thus bartered away his birthright for a mess of pottage? And when subsequently, at the suggestion of the Commissioner of Patents, a personal intimate friend of Dr. Jackson, Dr. Morton consented to permit Dr. Jackson's name to be associated with his own in the patent, — he having agreed, instead of the \$500, to receive one tenth part only of the profits, — we ask again, Is it conceivable that the sole discoverer would have thus associated another with himself, taking even an oath that they were joint discoverers, and, at the same time, have consented to receive only a pittance of what was wholly his own? No! We consider that Dr. Jackson is estopped for ever from such a claim, and that not upon technical grounds, but by the whole equity of the case. We will not, however, further pursue this ungracious part of our subject.

It is further matter of regret, that a patent should have been taken out for such a discovery. As well might Dr. Franklin have claimed one for the exclusive use of the electric fluid. A patent in this case, indeed, would seem to be a peculiarly odious monopoly,—a speculation based upon human suffering,—like an exclusive right to sell breadstuffs to a famishing community. It is due, however, to Dr. Morton to state that he tendered the free use of the discovery to this institution,\* and requested from Dr. John C. Warren a list of all similar institutions in the country, that he might extend its benefits to them. He, in like manner, tendered the free use of it to the army and navy of the United States. His design was, as he alleges, to charge to practitioners a moderate annual sum, which, he thought, would be paid cheerfully, and without inconvenience, by their respective patients.† Dr. Jackson's name would not have been associated in the patent, but at the instigation of R. H. Eddy, Esq. the commissioner, who has publicly avowed that he acted under a mistaken apprehension of facts, and who now awards to Dr. Morton the sole honor of the discovery, which at the time he supposed might fairly be regarded as a joint one. Mr. Eddy's intelligence and truthfulness, and his sincere friendship for Dr. Jackson, are well known in this community. But we must state our conviction, that it was a sad mistake to have resorted to any exclusive legal

\* He certainly made the offer, without any previous request from this Board; though a witness of Dr. Jackson's states, that it was made at his suggestion, and with a reluctant acquiescence on the part of Dr. Morton.

† In his license was inserted a clause, that such payments were to cease, if the United States, or the State where the practitioner lived, should purchase the right to use the discovery.

rights in the present instance. This has become the deliberate opinion of the profession and of the public. One of the patentees, Dr. Jackson, after applying to be admitted to a larger share of the profits, ultimately renounced all claims to any benefit from this source; and the patent has also become unavailable to Dr. Morton.\* We cannot, however, but wish, that it had been originally taken out rather from the hope of securing to themselves the honor than the profits of the discovery. And yet a national benefit of such magnitude is well entitled to a national reward. It may be true that Dr. Jackson does not need or now wish such reward; but it is a mortifying fact, that Dr. Morton's pecuniary affairs have become embarrassed, in consequence of the interruption of his regular business, resulting from his efforts and experiments in establishing this great truth, and that his health has also seriously suffered from the same

\* The two gentlemen who acted as legal advisers of Dr. Jackson addressed a letter to Messrs. R. H. Eddy and W. T. G. Morton, dated Boston, January 28, 1847, containing the two following sentences:—"Under the present circumstances of the case, we think the least that, in justice to yourselves and Dr. Jackson, you can offer is 25 per cent of the profits arising from the invention, both at home and abroad, in settlement of his claim upon you." . . .

"It is our wish to settle the matter amicably, if possible. We hope you will see, by our suggestions, that we wish only to have a fair distribution of the profits of a discovery made among those who cannot, if they disagree, effectually sustain the patent; and which, if sustained, *promises to give to all parties large sums of money for their united co-operation.*"—Dr. Gay, however, says that Dr. Jackson "deemed it a sort of impropriety to procure letters patent for the practical application of scientific discoveries. He himself never would have procured one, merely for his own pecuniary benefit, in a case so important to the interests of humanity."

In the memorial before referred to, as presented by Dr. Morton to the French Academy, the closing sentence is as follows:—"But, as the use has become general and almost necessary, I have long since abandoned the sale of rights (under the patent), and the public use the ether freely; and, I believe, I am the only person in the world to whom this discovery has so far been a pecuniary loss."

cause, so that he can devote only a small part of each day to his professional labors. He has become poor in a cause which has made the world his debtor.\* The

\* The Committee have the highest medical authority (that of Dr. Homans) for saying, that, from living so much of late in an atmosphere of ether, from the anxiety attending the various trials and experiments connected with the discovery, and from the excitement caused by the controversies which it has occasioned, the health of Dr. Morton has become such "that he is unable to attend to his professional duties to any extent." We have equally high authority from several members of the legal profession, and others, for our statement respecting Dr. Morton's circumstances. And, in this view, we subjoin extracts from a letter of Benj. F. Brooks, Esq. counsellor-at-law, the concluding sentence of which, honorable as it is to the writer, has the sincere approval of the Committee; also the confirmatory letters of Mr. Dana and of Mr. Burnett, the apothecary who supplies all the medicines used in this institution, and at whose shop the ether was purchased by which the discovery was made.

*Mr. Brooks's Letter.*

"Boston, 27 State-street, Jan. 14, 1848.

"N. I. Bowditch, Esq.—Dear Sir, It gives me pleasure to be able to communicate, in answer to your inquiry, the information I have relative to the pecuniary embarrassments under which Dr. W. T. G. Morton labors. I was employed, last summer, to collect a debt of him, and was thereby led into an examination of his affairs, the result of which was, that I found that he had no means of paying his debts, or supporting himself and family, except the proceeds of his professional labors. *The debt which I was engaged in collecting was contracted in carrying out his plans in respect to his discovery; and that, with several other debts contracted in the same way, were pressed upon him for payment.* Suits were commenced, and a large number of his patients trusted, which, together with the neglect which his business had suffered while he was employed about his discovery, materially diminished the extent of his practice. I am satisfied that Dr. Morton then made every effort, which could reasonably be required of him, to pay his debts, but could not. They are mostly still outstanding against him; and, with his present impaired state of health, the proceeds of his labors, although devoted to this purpose, — as heretofore, I believe, faithfully done, — will be so far diminished that he will not be able to meet his debts for a long time to come, if at all; while he is, and will be, continually subject to annoyances and trouble on account of them. . . . I have gone somewhat into detail, that you may see the nature of Dr. Morton's embarrassments. *They have grown out of his efforts in a cause which has resulted in a great public good, and he deserves a better fate than to be left to sink under them.* — Yours truly,

"BENJ. F. BROOKS."

*Mr. Burnett's Letter.*

"Boston, Jan. 8, 1848.

"N. I. Bowditch, Esq.—Dear Sir, In reply to your request to communicate such knowledge as I may have respecting the present pecuniary and personal condition of Dr. W. T. G. Morton, I would state, that my acquaintance with

Committee are, in this connection, authorized to state, that a memorial was prepared by the physicians and surgeons of this institution, to be forwarded to Congress at its present session, and had been already signed by eleven of them (all except Dr. J. B. S. Jackson), when further proceedings were stopped by a remonstrance from Dr. C. T. Jackson. This memorial, as embodying the views of these officers, is placed at the disposal of

him commenced in 1842, and has continued, by almost daily business intercourse, until the present time. By his own industry and perseverance, while under peculiar and perplexing difficulties, he increased his business largely from year to year, until about the close of the year 1846; when, owing to his exertions to introduce and extend the use of ether as an anaesthetic agent, his regular business was neglected, and, of course, very much injured. During the whole of this time, I have had considerable knowledge of his pecuniary affairs, and am satisfied that he has been a loser of several thousand dollars, directly or indirectly, in consequence of his labors devoted to this object. To the same cause (so far as it may be proper for an unprofessional man to express an opinion) I have attributed the present suffering condition of his health. In all my business relations with Dr. Morton, I have never had occasion to doubt the integrity of his intentions.—Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

“JOSEPH BURNETT.”

*Mr. Dana's Letter.*

“30, Court-street, Jan. 14, 1848.

“My dear Sir,—In answer to your further inquiries, I reply that you are right in supposing, that my situation, as legal adviser to Dr. Morton, has enabled me to know the state of his pecuniary affairs. He is now very much embarrassed, and has not the means of making even a satisfactory compromise with his creditors, in the way of present payment; yet, if his health does not fail him, he hopes to be able to pay all his debts in the course of two or three years—provided, of course, that his creditors will give him time and opportunity. I have recently made an examination of his affairs, in order to furnish a statement to his creditors, and am satisfied that his present indebtedness arises out of the unavoidable neglect of his dental business for some months after the announcement of the ether discovery, and the difficulty of re-establishing it in his present circumstances, added to the direct pecuniary losses he sustained in attempting to introduce the use of the ether under his patent right. I have read the letters of Mr. Burnett and Mr. Brooks, and can say that nearly all the facts stated by them are also within my knowledge, and that I agree with them in opinion as to the present state of Dr. Morton's health, business, and pecuniary affairs, and the causes which have produced it.—Truly your friend and servant,

“RICHD. H. DANA, JUN.”

“To N. I. Bowditch, Esq.”

your Committee; and we cannot better close this discussion than by subjoining the following copy of the document referred to:—

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled.*

The undersigned, Physicians and Surgeons of the Massachusetts General Hospital, beg leave to represent, —

That, in the year 1846, a discovery was made in the city of Boston, by which the human body is rendered insensible to pain, during surgical operations, and during other serious and violent affections, by means of the vapor of ether inhaled into the lungs.

That a patent for this discovery was taken out by two citizens of Boston, by whom the first satisfactory experiments on the prevention of pain by this means had been made; and the first capital operations, conducted under the influence of this agent, were performed in the Massachusetts General Hospital, by the surgeons of that institution.

That the success of this method of preventing pain has been abundantly and completely established by a hundred and fifteen operations performed in said Hospital during the last year, and by a still greater number out of it in the city of Boston.

And, in all cases within the knowledge of the undersigned, it has greatly mitigated, or wholly prevented, the pain, when skilfully administered, and in no case has any fatal or disastrous consequence followed its use, within their observation; and although inconveniences and temporary disturbances of the nervous system have sometimes followed its application, yet these are exceptions to a general rule, and are not more common than those which result from the employment of other powerful medicinal agents, and are incomparably less distressing than the evils they are employed to obviate.

The undersigned have reason to believe, that, since the introduction of this process, some thousands of persons have inhaled ether in Boston and its vicinity, with impunity and benefit; that its value is already recognized, and its employment introduced into most parts of Europe; that the use of the process ought to be, and, by judicious arrangements, probably will be, extended into all parts of the United States; and that no discovery in medical science, during the present

century, has relieved as much suffering, and conferred so great a benefit on humanity, as the discovery of the power and application of ether.

The undersigned are aware, that the power of ether to produce insensibility, and even death, when improperly used, was known in Europe many years ago. They are also aware, that other aeriform bodies have been experimented on, and the vapor of ether itself unsuccessfully tried, by other individuals, in surgical operations; but they are satisfied, that the safety of the process, and the effectual mode of applying it, were first made known in Boston in 1846.

Understanding that the use of this important discovery is now restricted by letters patent granted from the office of the Secretary of State, and believing that it is the policy of wise governments to diffuse among their constituents the blessings of such discoveries as tend to alleviate human suffering, and, at the same time, to reward those who have conferred such benefits upon the world, — the undersigned respectfully pray, that such sums as shall be thought adequate may be paid by the Government of the United States to those persons who shall be found, on investigation, to merit compensation for the benefit conferred on the public by this discovery, and on condition of the relinquishment by them of any patent right they may hold restricting its use.

(Signed)

JOHN C. WARREN.  
JACOB BIGELOW.  
GEO. HAYWARD.  
ENOCH HALE.  
S. D. TOWNSEND.  
JOHN D. FISHER.  
H. I. BOWDITCH.  
O. W. HOLMES.  
J. MASON WARREN.  
SAMUEL PARKMAN.  
HENRY J. BIGELOW.

*Boston, Nov. 20, 1847.*

As a general summary of facts and views, the Committee report that, in their judgment, the following propositions are satisfactorily established: —

Down to September 30, 1846, Dr. Jackson had discovered nothing that had not been known and in print in London for some years. It was known, that ether would produce insensibility; that such insensibility, though sometimes fatal, was sometimes safe; and that one of the properties of ether was its power to obviate the ill effects of an inhalation of chlorine gas. The discovery of the safety and efficacy of the inhalation of ether in surgical operations had not yet been made; the only experiments which Dr. Jackson had tried, or caused to be tried, being those already prescribed by the text-books. Dr. Jackson had for some time entertained a strong impression that it could be used with safety and effect during the operations of the dentist,—a conjecture which a hundred other persons may have made without discovering the fact; and incidentally, on more than one occasion, he had advised its use for that class of operations, but had been unable to persuade any one to use it, not even persons of science and intelligence, who were most familiar with all that Dr. Jackson knew or thought upon this subject.

Prior to this time, Dr. Wells had used the nitrous oxide for this object, as recommended many years before by Sir H. Davy. His experiments performed in Boston were, however, unsuccessful. He also claims to have performed one experiment with sulphuric ether, which, from the circumstances, must also necessarily be inferred to have been unsuccessful. And there is positive evidence that the most eminent physicians of Boston never heard of the latter experiment till after Dr. Morton's discovery.

Dr. Morton had for some time been engaged in search-

ing for a safe agent for promoting insensibility during dental operations. He knew of, and had, upon one occasion, taken part in, the nitrous-oxide experiments of Dr. Wells.

As early as July, 1846, he purchased sulphuric ether, and proceeded to experiment upon it. On September 30, 1846, he has an interview with Dr. Jackson, and receives his decided advice to use pure rectified sulphuric ether during a dental operation, accompanied with the strongest assurances of its safety, and with the information where it could be obtained. Dr. Morton, unlike others who had received this advice, and notwithstanding he knew the prevailing belief of the dangerous and sometimes fatal character of this agent,\* forthwith acted upon it. That he proceeded to inhale it himself, rests, indeed, on his own assertion. The Committee have no doubt of its truth. He certainly administered it to a patient. *By so doing, he made this discovery.*† On learning this result, Dr. Jackson very naturally suggested to Dr. Morton that he had better get the ether tried by the surgeons of the Hospital, which a witness of Dr. Morton's, however, alleges that he had previously determined to do. But all the subsequent steps were taken by Dr. Morton himself, without the slightest sympathy or co-operation on the part of Dr. Jackson, who, from alleged fear of his recklessness, withheld from him all countenance and encouragement. In view of these facts, the Committee are of opinion, that the *exclusive*

\* See Mr. Metcalf's letter, p. 22.

† Indeed, it seems to be distinctly admitted by the advocate of *Dr. Jackson*, that *he* had made no discovery in this case prior to Sept. 30, 1846. Dr. Gay says expressly, in commenting upon Dr. Wells's claims, — “Although so much time (two and a half years) has elapsed since Mr. Wells's experiments, he presents

claims advanced by Dr. Jackson,\* though now very extensively recognized in foreign countries, are unfounded,

no evidence of its adoption into general surgical practice, even in that flourishing city. *It required little more than the same number of months to diffuse the knowledge and application of Dr. Jackson's discovery throughout the civilized world.*"

In fact, the specification accompanying the patent, and signed both by Dr. Jackson and Dr. Morton, and bearing date Oct. 27, 1846, is most distinct in the same admission. We subjoin the following extracts, in proof of this position, and also of the fact that Dr. Jackson did not regard *sulphuric ether* as the *sole* agent which might be used to produce insensibility to pain:—

"It is well known to chemists, that, when alcohol is submitted to distillation with certain acids, peculiar compounds, termed *ethers*, are formed; each of which is usually distinguished by the name of the acid employed in its preparation. It has also been known, that the *vapors of some, if not all*, of these chemical distillations, *particularly those of sulphuric ether*, when breathed or introduced into the lungs of an animal, have produced a peculiar effect on its nervous system, one which has been supposed to be analogous to what is usually termed *intoxication*."

"It has never (to our knowledge) been known, *until our discovery*, that the inhalation of such vapors, *particularly those of sulphuric ether*, would produce insensibility to pain, or such a state of quiet nervous action as to render a person or animal incapable, to a great extent, if not entirely, of experiencing pain while under the action of the knife, or other instrument of operation of a surgeon, calculated to produce pain."

"*This is our discovery*," &c.

"From the experiments we have made, we are led to prefer the vapors of *sulphuric ether* to those of *muriatic or other kinds of ether*; but any such may be employed which will properly produce the state of insensibility, without any injurious consequences to the patient."

The testimony of Dr. Keep and of Mr. Barnes, in p. 21, as to Dr. Morton's not being aware of the importance of the admission of atmospheric air, having been commented upon by the Committee, it is proper here to add the fact, that in this very specification occurs the following sentence in the description of the apparatus to be employed:—"Let there be a hole made through the side of the vessel, for the admission of atmospheric air," &c. And the original apparatus first used at the Hospital by Dr. Morton is, as the Committee are informed, expressly constructed so as to admit atmospheric air. Besides, had no atmospheric air been admitted, his patients would probably have been killed, discredit thrown upon the process, and the discovery perhaps postponed for ages.

It may also be remarked, that, in view of this disclaimer, by Dr. Jackson, of any discovery prior to Sept. 30, 1846, it seems difficult to explain an expression which is quoted by Mr. Warren, in his pamphlet, as extracted from Dr. Jackson's letter to M. Elie de Beaumont, originally published in "Galignani's Messenger," Jan. 25, 1847; namely,—"I have *latterly* turned this discovery to use, by inducing a dentist of this city to administer the vapor of ether to persons whose teeth he was going to extract."

\* That such claims are really advanced by Dr. Jackson, is well known. He

being unwarranted alike by his acts and by his omissions ; and that they involve great injustice towards Dr. Morton ; — that their names will be for ever jointly, though not equally, associated in this discovery ; Dr. Jackson being entitled to the credit of having rendered readily available the existing knowledge upon the subject of ether, which Dr. Morton was really, though not avowedly, seeking to obtain ; and Dr. Morton having first demonstrated its safety and efficacy in the prevention of pain during surgical operations ; — and that Dr. Morton, by consenting to permit Dr. Jackson's name to be united with his in the patent, with the right to receive *one tenth* part of its profits, has shown himself disposed, fairly and honorably, to recognize the amount of his indebtedness to Dr. Jackson's advice.

The essential conclusions in the case may be thus concisely stated : —

1st, *Dr. Jackson does not appear at any time to have made any discovery, in regard to ether, which was not in print in Great Britain some years before.*

2d, *Dr. Morton, in 1846, discovered the facts before unknown, that ether would prevent the pain of surgical operations ; and that it might be given in sufficient quantity to effect this purpose, without danger to life. He first established these facts by numerous operations on teeth, and afterwards induced the surgeons of the Hospital to demonstrate its general applicability and importance in capital operations.*

said indeed to one of the Committee, “ I allow of no partnership in this matter. If your report takes from me such a proportion of the sole credit of this discovery as amounts even to the paring of a finger nail, I shall entirely object to it.”

3d, *Dr. Jackson appears to have had the belief, that a power in ether to prevent pain in dental operations would be discovered. He advised various persons to attempt the discovery. But neither they nor he took any measures to that end; and the world remained in entire ignorance of both the power and safety of ether, until Dr. Morton made his experiments.*

4th, *The whole agency of Dr. Jackson in the matter appears to consist only in his having made certain suggestions, which led or aided Dr. Morton to make the discovery,—a discovery which had for some time been the object of his labors and researches.\**

\* The results otherwise arrived at by the Committee have received the highest confirmation from Professor Simpson, the discoverer of chloroform, who has transmitted to Dr. Morton a copy of his pamphlet, entitled, "Account of a New Anaesthetic Agent, as a substitute for Sulphuric Ether, in Surgery and Midwifery," with the following note written upon one of its blank pages:—

"My dear Sir,—I have much pleasure in offering, for your kind acceptance, the accompanying pamphlet. Since it was published, we have had various other operations performed here, equally successful. I have a note from Mr. Liston, telling me also of its perfect success in London. Its rapidity and depth are amazing.

"In the *Monthly Journal of Medical Science* for September, I have a long article on etherization, vindicating your claims over those of Jackson.

"Of course, the great thought is that of producing insensibility; and for that the world is, I think, indebted to you.

"I read a paper lately to our Society, showing that it was recommended by Pliny, &c. in old times.

"With very great esteem for you, allow me to subscribe myself,

"Yours very faithfully,

"J. Y. SIMPSON."

"Edinburgh, 19th Nov. 1847."

Accordingly, in a note published with the article referred to, is the following sentence:—"Within the last few days, I have seen a pamphlet, dated Boston, May 30, 1847, in which it is stated, that, for three months previously, all apparatus had been laid aside, and the sponge alone used for etherization, by Dr. Morton, of that city,—the gentleman to whom, I believe, the profession and mankind are really and truly indebted for first reducing into practice the production of insensibility by ether inhalation, with the object of annihilating pain in surgical operations."

The Committee are well aware, that any investigation and opinion which shall have the sanction of this Board — emanating, as all must admit, from those who ought to know most of the circumstances of this discovery — will be entitled to great weight. That investigation has been conducted by the Committee under a solemn sense of responsibility to the public, to posterity, and to the cause of truth and justice. Personal feelings have been laid aside. When this inquiry was instituted, neither of the Committee had ever seen Dr. Morton ; and both of them, on the other hand, were in friendly relations with Dr. Jackson. There had always existed between them and him feelings of mutual respect and regard. No friend of Dr. Jackson would willingly remove a merited laurel from the brows of one whose scientific attainments, upright intentions, and amiable character, all are happy to acknowledge. The Committee, indeed, believe that he is honestly self-deceived in this matter.

We submit our Report upon this subject to the Board, in the assurance that it will receive their deliberate examination, and that its conclusions will be adopted, if at all, under a like solemn sense of responsibility.\*

\* A few remarks upon the manner in which this inquiry has been pursued, may not perhaps be inappropriate.

The Committee considered, that, as Dr. Morton alone assisted in the early experiments at the Hospital, they were not strictly called upon to mention Dr. Jackson ; but, inasmuch as Dr. Gay's pamphlet had been for some time before the world, and also Mr. Warren's reply, it seemed that the whole subject had been submitted by the parties to the tribunal of the public, and that the public would reasonably expect from this institution such a narrative of the facts as might be prepared from these *and from other sources more especially within our reach.* Both these pamphlets were therefore very carefully examined and compared ; twenty-two individuals, most conversant with the subject, consulted ; and the report substantially prepared. The Committee then deemed it advisable to address a note to Dr. Jackson, informing him that Dr. Gay's pamphlet had been considered by them as containing a full statement of his claims ; that if,

## THE Accounts and Reports prepared by the Physician and Superintendent, and by the Steward of the M'Lean

however, he had any additional facts to communicate, the Committee would be happy to receive them. The result was two personal interviews, besides one of three hours' duration (by express appointment) with Dr. Gay in behalf of Dr. Jackson. Dr. Gay offered to prove certain facts, having no connection with or relation to this discovery, which the Committee declined hearing. He also said he had other evidence of a strictly confidential character, which was also declined. He then proceeded to comment upon the testimony contained in Mr. Warren's pamphlet. All his arguments and objections upon this point have been fairly stated by the Committee from memoranda taken at the time; and the deliberate views of the Committee, in relation to these objections, have been also stated. The Committee, at this interview, wished to know the worst that could be suggested as to the credibility of these witnesses. Few remarks were therefore made to Dr. Gay, as to the sufficiency of his objections; but they were noted as subjects for future investigation. The Committee may have said, "Well, putting this deposition aside for this ground, what is your objection to the next deposition?" But it was, on the other hand, distinctly suggested to Dr. Gay, that two of these witnesses were very favorably spoken of, and that the testimony of Whitman, whose character even Dr. Gay admitted to have been above suspicion, was obviously confirmatory of matters stated by the two witnesses referred to; and that even Whitman's testimony alone was sufficient to prove that Dr. Morton was striving to realize the idea of this discovery, and was therefore irreconcileable with Dr. Jackson's *exclusive* claims.

The Committee mentioned to Dr. Jackson, that they had obtained some new testimony in favor of Dr. Morton (meaning the letters of Mr. Metcalf and of Dr. Dana); but, believing that the testimony in these letters was of a nature not to be rebutted, the Committee did not feel called upon to state the fact, that either of these two gentlemen had been consulted. The Committee felt themselves perfectly free, like every one else, to form and to express an opinion upon a matter of universal interest and importance, and which indeed seemed to fall naturally within their peculiar province, *even though they had not the previous permission of Dr. Jackson*. Their report had been unanimously accepted by the Trustees, and presented to and unanimously accepted by the Corporation. While it was in process of publication, a note was received from Dr. Gay, alleging that he supposed his objections to the testimony in Mr. Warren's pamphlet were recognized by the Committee as well founded, and protesting against the course pursued by the Trustees of the Massachusetts General Hospital in giving "any countenance to the attempt of Mr. Morton to rob Dr. Jackson of his sacred right to his own discovery." Dr. Gay, in his note, significantly adds, that "Dr. Jackson has always, excepting in one unguarded moment, declined submitting his claims to any tribunal, either to be agreed upon by the parties, *or self-constituted and forced upon him*." He alleges that Dr. Jackson has much new evidence, that the investigation of the Committee must necessarily have been partial, &c. This note of Dr. Gay was laid before the Trustees, at a meeting held Feb. 6; but they deemed no action necessary thereupon. The Committee claim no judicial

Asylum for the Insane, are herewith submitted. The salaries paid by the Treasurer to the officers of the Asylum have been \$4,500, and he has received back \$4,000; so that this department has occasioned but a very slight charge to the general funds under our care. There have been under treatment, during the year, 343 inmates, of whom 87 have recovered, and 33 have died. The number remaining, Dec. 31, 1847, was 173. The whole number received from the opening of the Asylum, Oct. 6, A.D. 1818, to this time, is 2,864.

The M'Lean Asylum has continued, during the past year, to be conducted upon those salutary principles which the experience of later times, in respect to treatment of the insane, has introduced into this department of medical science.

The day of physical restraints and coercion has passed away for ever. Kindness, amusements, opportunities of exercise, and agreeable employments, are now our chief remedial agents. The item of "diversions" has its definite place in all our quarterly accounts of expenditures. The natural beauties of our situation, with its extensive prospects, — our garden, with its terraces and its pond, — the bowling alleys, the billiard room, the dancing hall, the sewing circle, — have solaced and done much

powers or functions. Dr. Jackson is perfectly free to continue in his present determination of never submitting his exclusive claims to any human tribunal, or he may hereafter submit them to one which he shall regard as more competent or impartial. If, by any new evidence, he can establish these claims, he is still at liberty so to do. The Committee can only state, that they have endeavored to prosecute their inquiries in a fair, cautious, and thorough manner, and that they feel the utmost confidence in the soundness of the conclusions at which they have arrived; and, conscious that no proceeding or neglect on their part has justified the remarks of Dr. Gay, they here take leave of this subject for ever.

to restore many an inmate of our institution. As a pleasing manifestation of the desire felt by its officers to afford innocent gratification to those under their charge, we may mention, that (a reservoir having been constructed near the summer-house, and pipes laid from it) the garden has this year received the additional ornament of a marble basin, tenanted with gold and silver fish, and having a small but graceful jet rising from its midst. The Trustees have also been, as usual, much gratified by promoting the same objects, as they had opportunity, during their weekly visits. Any trifling attentions which we have been enabled to pay upon such occasions have always been agreeably received and kindly acknowledged.

The Board are aware, that three railroads already pass very near to the enclosed grounds of the Asylum. Still another has been applied for at the present session of the Legislature. A Committee has been appointed to prevent, if possible, by a most earnest remonstrance, a measure so prejudicial to the welfare of this department of our institution.

The past season has been remarkable for the prevalence of dysentery throughout this vicinity, and it will long be remembered with peculiar sadness by those connected with the Asylum. Between July 26 and Sept. 20, no less than seventy decided cases occurred among the patients, whose whole number did not, within that period, exceed 170: twelve of these cases terminated fatally. Of those who died, there were several who had been with us for a long series of years, whose recovery was hopeless. Others, on the contrary, had been with us but a short time, and might, after a brief interval, have

carried back joy and happiness to the circles of family and friendship. More than one death we can recall, which must have inspired in those to whom the patients were dear, feelings of the most severe grief and disappointment. There were, besides, ten cases of this disease among the household at the M'Lean Asylum, during the same period. That, of those attacked, so large a proportion recovered, cannot fail to excite surprise and gratitude. We doubt not that the result may, in no inconsiderable degree, be attributed to the unremitting efforts of the officers and attendants, whose zeal, patience, and self-denial, are most fully acknowledged in the Report of the Physician and Superintendent. Mr. Tyler, our Steward, was prostrated by this disease; and his recovery was so slow, that, for some time, the Trustees were apprehensive lest he should find his strength insufficient for a continuance of those duties which he has so long and so ably performed. He has the best wishes of the Board for his speedy and entire restoration to health and strength.

While oppressed by unusual official cares and anxieties, Dr. Bell, our Physician and Superintendent, was called to experience the bitterness of repeated domestic bereavements. His second child,\* a daughter of ten years of age, of a bright and sunny disposition, with rare moral and intellectual endowments,— and another, an interesting boy,† of five years of age,— within a few short weeks, fell victims, the one to this epidemic, the other to consumption. To the afflicted parents we present the assurance of the profound and respectful

\* Mary Frances died Aug. 22.

† Henry James died Oct. 3.

sympathy of the Trustees. Now that the loved ones of earth have been taken, may these mourners the better see Heaven's love! May their grief be soothed by the gentle ministry of time, — by the hallowed memories of the past, the high duties of the present, and the sacred hopes of the future!

The Committee cannot conclude, without tendering to the medical and surgical officers of this institution, and others whom they have had occasion to consult, their sincere acknowledgments; and they trust, that this Board will, in the importance and interest of the subjects discussed, find a sufficient apology for the unusual length of this communication.

N. I. BOWDITCH, } Committee.  
J. W. EDMANDS, }

*Boston, January 1, 1848.*

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[Spear and Leavitt being the two witnesses whose testimony, if believed, proved direct experiments, the Committee thought it unnecessary to apply to the gentlemen who vouch for the credibility of Dr. Hayden or Dr. Hardy, particularly as, with one exception, they were not personally acquainted with the gentlemen thus referred to. This omission, however, on the part of the Committee must not be construed as in the slightest degree reflecting on the entire credibility of either of these witnesses.]

## EXTRACT FROM DR. GEO. HAYWARD'S PAMPHLET,

*Referred to on page 13.*

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It is well known that surgeons have for a long time sought to discover means of lessening, in some degree, if they could not altogether prevent, the pain of surgical operations ; but their efforts were unsuccessful, and the world is indebted to individuals, not strictly of the surgical profession, for a discovery that will do more than any other to lessen human suffering. I believe I am warranted in saying, that this remarkable property of ether, when taken into the human system by inhalation, of rendering surgical operations painless, was discovered in this city ; and that the first successful application of it was made here in September last by Dr. Morton, a distinguished dentist. He extracted teeth from several individuals who were made insensible and unconscious in this way, without any subsequent ill effects.

It is understood that Dr. C. T. Jackson, well known by his great attainments in geology and chemistry, first suggested the use of the ether ; but to Dr. Morton, I think, must be awarded the credit of being the first who demonstrated, by actual experiment on the human subject, the existence of this wonderful property. Having satisfied himself that teeth could be extracted without pain from those who had previously inhaled the ether, he was desirous of having it tried on patients who were to undergo longer and more severe surgical operations. For this purpose he applied, about the middle of October last, to have it used at the Massachusetts General Hospital ; and Dr. J. C. Warren, the attending surgeon at the time, at once consented.

The ether was administered at the Hospital by Dr. Morton on the 16th of October to a man upon whom Dr. Warren was to operate for a tumor on the face. The effect in this case was not complete : the suffering, however, was very much less than it would have been under ordinary circumstances, and the result was on the whole so satisfactory, that a second trial was made on the following day.

The patient to whom the ether was administered on the 17th of October was a female, with a fatty tumor on the arm, between the shoulder and the elbow. At the request of Dr. Warren, I did the operation. The patient was insensible during the whole time, and

was entirely unconscious. The operation lasted about seven minutes, but could not be regarded as a very severe one.

These are the first surgical operations, except those of dentistry, that were ever performed on patients while under the influence of the ether.

On the first of November, I took the charge of the surgical department of the Hospital; and on the following day, in conversation with Dr. Warren, I stated that I did not intend to allow the surgical patients to inhale this preparation of Dr. Morton (for we were then ignorant of the precise nature of it) during my period of service, unless all the surgeons of the Hospital were told what it was, and were satisfied of the safety of using it. Dr. Warren agreed with me as to the propriety of this course.

On the 6th of November, Dr. Morton called at my house, and asked me if I was willing to have his preparation inhaled by a patient, whose limb I was to amputate on the following day. I told him of the conversation I had had with Dr. Warren on the subject. Dr. Morton at once said that he was ready to let us know what the article was, and to give to the surgeons of the Hospital the right to use it there when they pleased. He added, that he would send me a letter, in the course of the day, to this effect. I requested him to address it to Dr. Warren, as he was the senior surgeon, and told him that I would submit it to my colleagues at a consultation to be held on the following morning. He wrote the letter accordingly; the subject was maturely considered by the surgeons, who were unanimously of opinion that the ether should be inhaled by the individual who was to undergo the operation that day.

The patient was a girl of twenty years of age, named Alice Mohan, who had suffered for two years from a disease of the knee, which terminated in suppuration of the joint and caries of the bones. For some months before the operation, her constitutional symptoms had become threatening, and the removal of the limb seemed to be the only chance for her life. The ether was administered by Dr. Morton. In a little more than three minutes, she was brought under the influence of it; the limb was removed, and all the vessels were tied but the last, which was the sixth, before she gave any indication of consciousness or suffering. She then groaned and cried out faintly. She afterwards said that she was wholly unconscious and insensible up to that time, and she seemed to be much surprised when she was told that her limb was off. She recovered rapidly, suffering less than patients usually do after amputation of the thigh, regained her strength and flesh, and was discharged well on the 22d of December.

## LETTER FROM MR. WIGHTMAN.

"N. I. Bowditch, Esq.

"Boston, Feb. 10, 1848.

"Dear Sir,—In answer to your note of yesterday, desiring any information I might be able to communicate with regard to Dr. Morton's application of ether, I am happy to render the following statement for the use of the Trustees of the Hospital, which, if it will aid their investigations, is entirely at their service.

"My acquaintance with Dr. Morton commenced in the summer of 1846, when he applied to me for some information upon increasing the security of artificial teeth by atmospheric pressure. A short time afterwards (I think within a few weeks), he called again, and, in reply to me, stated that he had abandoned his views on atmospheric pressure, which he found were erroneous, and was then engaged upon something of much greater importance in his profession. He then wished me to show him some bags of India rubber cloth, made for retaining gas, and inquired whether it would do to put sulphuric ether into them. My answer was, that ether was used to soften rubber, and might dissolve it so as to make the bag leak. He then asked me if an oiled silk bag would retain it. I told him that the silk was covered with a preparation of linseed oil, which I had no doubt would be acted upon by the ether; but, as I could give him no *certain* information respecting the effect, I advised him to call upon Dr. Charles T. Jackson, who was well versed in these matters, and could give him the necessary information. He then observed that Dr. Jackson was a friend of his; that he had boarded in his family; had been a student with him; and that he did not think of it before, but would call upon him.

"A few days after this interview, Dr. Morton came to me for some chemical glasses, and appeared inclined to keep from me the purpose for which he wished them; but, in the course of the conversation, I had no question in my mind but they were for experiments with ether. The article he then took not answering his purpose, he visited my rooms a number of times during the week; and, after trying various articles, he informed me that what he wished to have was something which would allow ether to be inhaled from it, to produce insensibility to pain in his dental operations. I inquired of him whether this would not injure the lungs. He replied that he had tried it himself, and administered it without experiencing any ill effects, and that Dr. Jackson said that it was not injurious.

"After suggesting various forms for an inhaler, we decided upon a tubulated globe receiver, into which he proposed to put a piece of sponge, to be kept saturated with ether, and have the opening through which the retort usually enters placed over the mouth, and the air admitted through the *tubulure*, or hole for the stopper. I advised him to try this, and, if it answered the purpose, to have an appropriate vessel made. He then left me, and I did not see him again, until one afternoon he called upon me in great haste, and begged me to assist him to prepare an apparatus with which he could administer the ether to a patient at the Hospital the next day, as Dr. Warren had consented to use it in an operation. He appeared much excited; and although, from a pressure of other engagements, it was very inconvenient for me, yet I consented to arrange a temporary apparatus under these circumstances. This apparatus was composed of a quart tubulated globe receiver, having a cork fitted into it instead of a glass stopper, through which cork a pipette or dropping tube was inserted to supply the ether as it was evaporated. I then cut several large grooves around the cork to admit the air freely into the globe to mix with the vapor, and delivered it to Dr. Morton.

"From this time I have had but one interview with Dr. Morton, and I regret that I am unable to furnish specific dates for these transactions; but, from the variety of articles tried and returned by Dr. Morton, and the trifling value of those taken by him at different times, I made no charges to him in my books. I am therefore indebted to other circumstances for the date of these occurrences, one of which is that I returned to Boston from the country with my family on the 28th Sept. 1846; a fact which appears from an actual entry in my books. In the cars I met Dr. Morton; and, from my recollection of the circumstances at that time, I am satisfied that the conversation about the effect of sulphuric ether upon the gas bags was previous to that time. My attention was called to the date and circumstances of this interview in the winter of 1846-7, and I then satisfied myself upon the matter.

"On the appearance of the article signed "E. W." in the Daily Advertiser of March 5, 1847, in which some allusion was made to me, Dr. Jackson and Mr. Peabody called upon me in reference to my knowledge of the dates of Dr. Morton's interviews with me. I explained the matter to them at that time; and, although we differed in opinion as to the date of Dr. Morton's *first* application to me, yet I am happy to state that Dr. Jackson has since admitted to me, that my view of the dates of the transactions was substantially correct, adding that he could substantiate his discovery as far back as 1842. — Yours respectfully,

"JOSEPH M. WIGHTMAN."

The Committee make the following remarks on this letter: — The date of Mr. Wightman's coming to Boston is fixed beyond all doubt. The circumstances connected with this occasion have been verbally stated to the Committee, and are of a nature, rendering, in their judgment, a mistake impossible. This letter, then, proves that, prior to Sept. 28, 1846, or more than two days before his interview with Dr. Jackson, Dr. Morton called on Mr. Wightman, alluded to some intended discovery of great importance, and inquired about bags, suitable for holding sulphuric ether. And it would seem probable, that it was owing only to a casual suggestion then made, that Dr. Jackson, rather than some other learned chemist, was subsequently consulted by Dr. Morton.

The letter also proves, that Dr. Jackson had heard from Mr. Wightman (as well as from Mr. Metcalf, see p. 23) facts which it seems difficult to reconcile with his (Dr. Jackson's) conviction, expressed so strongly to the Committee, that Dr. Morton was wholly ignorant of sulphuric ether, down to the interview with him. Dr. Jackson, and his friend Mr. Peabody, seem, indeed, to have been aware of the important bearing of Mr. Wightman's testimony on this point. Therefore, in March, 1847, they endeavored strenuously, but in vain, to satisfy him that he was mistaken as to the date of his first interview with Dr. Morton, about the gas bags. It would seem that Dr. Jackson had not yet resorted to the hypothesis, that he had made his discovery in 1842; since that, of course, rendered all these transactions with Dr. Morton of no consequence. Accordingly, in his later interview with Mr. Wightman, Dr. Jackson said, in effect, "You may be about right in your dates; but it is immaterial to me, as I can substantiate my discovery as far back as 1842." Unfortunately, Dr. Jackson, in the specification accompanying the patent, had, under oath, disavowed any discovery prior to that which he made jointly with Dr. Morton; and the Committee have proved, that what Dr. Jackson knew about ether in 1842 had been published by Pereira in 1839.

## R E P O R T

OF THE

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL  
FOR THE YEAR 1847.*Admitted to the Hospital from January 1, 1847, to  
Jan. 1, 1848.*

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Patients paying board . . . . .	210	69	279
Do. paying part of time . . . . .	27	14	41
Do. entirely free . . . . .	184	170	354
	—	—	—
	421	253	674

Of these, 285 paid \$3; 21 paid \$6; 10 paid \$4; and 4 paid \$10. Total, 320.

*Discharged during the year.*

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Well . . . . .	211	129	340
Much relieved . . . . .	46	24	70
Relieved . . . . .	41	34	75
Not relieved . . . . .	30	24	54
Not treated . . . . .	21	6	27
Eloped . . . . .	1	1	2
Insane . . . . .		1	1
Dead . . . . .	37	20	57
	—	—	—
	387	239	626

Proportion of deaths to the whole number of results, one in thirteen.

Greatest number of patients at any one visit in private rooms, 7; greatest number of paying patients, 41; of free patients, 82; greatest total, 123; least number in private rooms, 2; least paying, 17; free, 37; least total, 54.

Number of accidents admitted during the year, 74.

Average number of patients, 45 males; 36 females; total, 81.

Average number of paying patients, 15 American and 14 Foreign; total, 29.

Greatest number of paying patients, 22 American and 19 Foreign; least number of paying patients, 10 American and 7 Foreign.

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*Analysis of Patients.*

		Pay.	Free.	Part of time paying.
Males — Mechanics	. . .	70	27	9
Laborers	. . .	58	102	11
Farmers	. . .	15	3	2
Minors	. . .	17	33	1
Teachers	. . .	2	1	
Seamen	. . .	18	13	5
Tailors	. . .	2	1	
Clergymen	. . .	3		
Clerks	. . .	6	5	
Merchants	. . .	10	1	
Physicians	. . .	6		
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		207	186	28

Total males, 421. Of this number, 40 were in private rooms.

	Pay.	Free.	Part of time paying.
Females — Domestics . . . . .	34	80	6
Minors . . . . .	9	21	1
Wives . . . . .	22	30	3
Widows . . . . .	6	29	
Seamstresses . . . . .	2	7	2
Teacher . . . . .		1	
	—	—	—
	73	168	12

Total females, 253. Of these, 5 were in private rooms. A little over one fourth of the free patients were female domestics; nearly one fourth were male laborers, the most of whom were foreigners.

Average time of ward-paying patients is three weeks and a half; and of free patients, four weeks and a half.

Proportion of ward beds occupied by free patients, a fraction less than two to one.

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*Annual Expenses for 1847.*

Stores . . . . .	\$8,573.50
Contingencies . . . . .	195.13
Wages . . . . .	6,433.19
Fuel . . . . .	2,851.23
Furniture . . . . .	1,195.79
Medicine . . . . .	2,677.74
Repairs . . . . .	751.76
Stationery . . . . .	217.96
Grounds . . . . .	16.50
Salaries . . . . .	1,600.00
	—
	\$24,512.80

The whole amount of board charged to all the patients, during the year, was \$13,353.84. Of this sum there was charged to the Trustees, for the board of free patients, \$8,352.07; and the balance, \$5,001.77, has been received from paying patients.

If the gross amount of the annual expense be divided by the average number of patients, it will give \$5.64 for the weekly expense of each patient.

RICHARD GIRDLER, *Superintendent.*

*To the Board of Trustees.*

TABLE OF ADMISSIONS AND RESULTS AT THE MASS. GENERAL HOSPITAL, FROM ITS OPENING.

Year.	Admitted.	Discharged.	Whole No. under care.	Unfit.	Eloped.	Dead.	Not Relieved.	Relieved.	Much Relieved.	Well.	By re-Insane quest.	By re-Mis- condit.	Remaining at end of the year.
1821	18	12	121	195	1	4	12	3	24	4	60	7	6
1822	115	103	121	195	7	7	29	4	55	14	81	7	19
1823	188	174	121	195	5	2	34	16	82	78	152	3	33
1824	349	338	368	368	5	3	30	68	80	141	228	22	44
1825	407	404	440	440	5	3	30	18	64	42	106	189	47
1826	553	550	597	597	3	3	29	59	76	96	269	11	50
1827	428	428	475	475	3	3	32	51	67	68	299	11	42
1828	544	548	595	595	5	3	33	46	58	66	221	4	46
1829	535	527	577	577	6	2	33	46	58	66	221	3	54
1830	423	429	469	469	2	3	28	36	69	84	213	4	48
1831	448	444	502	502	2	4	44	38	45	55	259	2	52
1832	447	448	495	495	1	7	44	31	53	65	272	1	51
1833	515	522	567	567	7	5	31	45	56	81	242	1	44
1834	481	488	532	532	5	5	45	45	56	66	174		
1835	505	492	549	549	8	2	44	67	79	96	193		52
1836	485	482	537	537	2	2	44	55	52	103	224		55
1837	440	453	495	495	7	3	32	54	68	84	206		42
1838	380	384	422	422	3	1	35	48	55	66	174		38
1839	369	360	407	407	5	2	19	40	82	78	128		47
1840	362	355	409	409	4	3	22	43	41	96	142		57
1841	404	403	461	461	6	3	26	53	65	87	151		48
1842	347	344	395	395	4	1	25	45	51	86	121		51
1843	365	364	416	416	4	1	41	55	41	74	136		52
1844	434	481	486	486	22	2	47	41	67	70	183		56
1845	453	454	509	509	6	2	54	37	69	61	205		55
1846	459	447	514	514	2	3	36	30	74	63	211		67
1847	674	626	744	744	2	2	57	54	75	70	340	1	115
Totals													

The above table, though made from official documents, has a few slight inaccuracies.

LIST OF PATIENTS AFFECTED WITH FEVER, WHO ENTERED THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL  
HOSPITAL, FROM JAN. 1, 1845, TO DEC. 31, 1847, INCLUSIVE, WITH RESULTS.

1845. Month.	Number.	Male.	Female.	Type of Fever.	Well.	M. R'd.	Relvd.	Dead.	Remarks.
Mar.	1	1		Typhoid	1				
May	5	3	2	Typhus, 4; Intermittent, 1	3	1		1	
June	3	1	2	Typhoid, 2; Doubtful, 1	3	3			
July	5	1	4	Typhoid	3	1		1	Entered moriband.
Aug.	4	2	2	Typhoid	3	3			
Sept.	7	4	3	Typhoid	6	1			
Oct.	11	10	1	Typhoid, 10; Ephemerai, 1	10	6		1	
Nov.	6	3	3	Typhoid	6				
Dec.	3	2	1	Typhoid	3				
Total	45	27	18		38	3		4	
1846.									
Jan.	2	1	1	Typhoid, 1; Intermittent, 1	1			1	
April	2	1	2	Doubtful	1	1		1	
May	1	1		Intermittent	1				
June	5	4	1	Typhoid, 3; Intermittent, 1; Typhus, 1.	4				
July	5	4	1	Typhoid, 4; Doubtful, 1	5				
Aug.	8	6	2	Typhoid, 6; Doubtful, 2	6				
Sept.	8	4	4	Typhoid	7	1			
Oct.	5	4	1	Typhoid	5				
Nov.	4	3	1	Typhoid	3	1			
Dec.	1	1		Intermittent	1				
Total	41	28	13		34	1	3	2	1

Month.	Number.	Male.	Female.	Type of Fever.	Well.	M. R'd.	Relived.	Dead.	Remarks.
Jan.	1	1	1	Typhoid	1			1	
Feb.	1	1	2	Doubtful					
Mar.	3	1	2	Typhoid					
April	7	2	5	Typhoid, 5; Typhus, 2					
May	5	2	3	Typhoid, 2; Typhus, 3					
June	7	1	6	Typhoid, 6; Typhus, 1					
July	8	3	5	Typhoid, 6; Typhus, 1; Doubtful, 1					
Aug.	15	11	4	Typhoid, 12; Typhus, 2; Intermittent, 1					
Sept.	15	10	5	Typhoid					
Oct.	28	14	14	Typhoid					
Nov.	23	12	11	Typhoid, 22; Inflammatory, 1					
Dec.	15	13	2	Typhoid, 13; Typhus, 2					
Total	128	70	58						

February 1, 1848.

Total for 1845, 1846, 1847 . . . . . 214.

## S U M M A R Y.

	Entered.	Discharged.
Males	-	-
Females	-	-
Total	-	-
Typhoid fever	-	-
Typhus fever	-	-
Fever of doubtful type	-	-
Intermittent fever	-	-
Ephemeral fever	-	-
Inflammatory fever	-	-
Well	125	
Much relieved	-	
Relieved	-	
Not relieved	-	
Insane (Females)	-	
Left without permission	-	
Dead (Males, 7; Females, 7. — Typhus, 4; Typhoid, 10)	-	
Remaining in Hospital at this date (convalescent)	-	
	114	2
		8
		4
		214

The results of this table seem to prove, that the ventilation of the Hospital must be better than that of most private houses. As a further evidence of this fact, it may be mentioned that no case of erysipelas has occurred during the past year.

THIRTIETH  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
PHYSICIAN AND SUPERINTENDENT  
OF THE  
MCLEAN ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE,  
TO THE TRUSTEES  
OF THE  
MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL.

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UNDER the expectation that no small share of that time and space which has ordinarily been devoted to the affairs of this Asylum will be required, the present year, for the communication of the history and results of that wonderful mode of annihilating pain, of which the other branch of the General Hospital has been the scene of the preliminary elucidation and final triumphs,— I propose to confine myself within the narrowest limits of detail, adequate to present, in the words of the Regulation, “a general view of the institution and its results for the whole year.”

As, for many years, this department has occupied far more than its legitimate share, in view of its comparative extent and importance, of the annual conference with the Corporation and the community, it is gratified with the opportunity of yielding place to the momentous incident referred to.

The detail of the various circumstances connected with the management of the insane has so often been repeated in the Reports of this and other institutions, in the absolute dearth of something new to say, that it must have become so tedious as to render its omission, for at least a single time, quite a relief to writer and reader.

The institution has been, as for some years past, constantly filled to its utmost capacity. The entire number under its care has indeed exceeded that of any previous year, by some forty-four members; but this circumstance has happened from a more favorable concurrence of admissions and discharges. For no additional accommodations have been added, and scarcely any greater compression in the dormitories occupied by a number of inmates.

The average monthly residence, as deduced from the Visiting Committee's weekly record, has been, for January, 172; Feb., 174; March, 172; April, 170; May, 169; June, 172; July, 174; August, 174; September, 173; October, 174; November, 172; and December, 172. — This gives for the entire year an average of over 172 patients.

At the close of last year (1846), there were in the house one hundred and seventy-three patients, eighty-eight males and eighty-five females. There were admitted, during the present year, ninety-four males and seventy-six females, making one hundred and seventy; of both sexes under care, there have consequently been three hundred and forty-three persons.

There have been dismissed, during the year, one hundred and seventy, eighty-nine males and eighty-one females; — leaving with us, this last day of the year,

ninety-three males and eighty females; a total of one hundred and seventy-three inmates.

Of those dismissed, forming a judgment on the same principles as heretofore, we have considered eighty-seven, forty-two males and forty-five females, to have been restored to their usual condition of mind; nine, four males and five females, were much improved; sixteen, nine males and seven females, were improved; twenty-one, fifteen males and six females, underwent no important change, and were not improved; twenty-one, twelve males and nine females, were removed by death, usually the sequel of chronic disease, old age, epilepsy, and consumption; twelve sunk under epidemic dysentery, five males and seven females; and four, two of each sex, were not considered as proper objects for the institution, and are classed as unfit.

The bill of mortality is unusually large. This is ascribable in part to the fact, that in the preceding year the number of deaths was only nine, less than half the ordinary average; throwing upon the then ensuing period quite a number of aged, feeble, and epileptic. The existence of a severe intractable epidemic dysentery, prevalent also throughout the county, occasioning us the loss of twelve patients out of eighty in our household, who were seized with the disease, was fully reported to your Board in a special communication. It is a palliation to our regrets at parting with so many persons, long domiciliated here, and between whom and our household the kindest relations had grown up in years of intercourse, that there was but a single individual of the whole number, of whose ultimate mental recovery there was the slightest hope.

In all other respects, the year has been of the most satisfactory character, having brought neither accident, suicide, nor other painful circumstance.

Personal restraint, as in some preceding years, has been used only in two cases, where the necessity could not be avoided without hazard to the patient.

*Table of Admissions, Discharges, &c. since the Asylum has been under the direction of its present head.*

YEAR.	Admitted.	Dismissed	Whole No. under care.	Died.	Much im- proved, im- proved, not improved, and unfit.	Recov- ered.	Remain- ing at end of year.	Average No. of Patients.
1837	120	105	191	8	25	72	86	80
1838	138	131	224	12	45	74	93	95
1839	132	117	225	10	38	69	108	112
1840	155	138	263	13	50	75	125	128
1841	157	141	283	11	55	75	142	135
1842	129	138	271	15	43	80	133	143
1843	127	126	260	18	45	63	134	131
1844	158	140	292	19	49	68	152	146
1845	119	120	271	13	33	74	151	149
1846	148	126	299	9	52	65	173	164
1847	170	170	343	33	50	87	173	172
Totals	1553	1452		161	485	802		

For our large ratio of recovered, and the small number of much improved, being but four of both sexes, we feel a direct obligation to the annual receipts from the income of the fund presented by the President of your Board, and your continued abatements. These have enabled us to retain almost every case, until a fair trial was made, if there was any chance of recovery. Mr. Wm. Appleton's donation, referred to, is applicable exclusively to the aid of that class of probably curable patients, whose friends have exerted themselves, as much as they could do, to extend their residence here, until recovery, and

some degree of confirmation of soundness, have been attained. Could that benevolent gentleman see the long line of those who have been the unconscious recipients of his aid, and have through that been restored to health, comfort, and usefulness, whose fate would otherwise have been that of hopeless loss of reason, his generous spirit would reap a full reward.

It has been our aim to adopt, as it has been your undeviating willingness to sanction, any outlay for every real improvement which the experience of the world has offered in treating those disorders, one of the symptoms of which is alienation of mind. Aware, from frequent disappointment, that many of the novelties, moral and medical, which furnish a hope to the sanguine and a newspaper paragraph to the curious, have but an ephemeral existence, we have each year found ourselves less hopeful as to new means of treating the insane, and have been gradually attaining the belief, that that institution which most closely pursued and thoroughly carried out the views presented a half century since by Pinel and Tuke would best fulfil its great end. The investigation of Moreau and others, into the properties and effects of the drug termed *hachisch*, in producing a continuous state of happy reverie, calculated to replace simple melancholy or functional nervous depression, and the recent discovery of the effects of those wonderful agents, the inhalation of the vapor of ether and chloroform, rekindle the hope that some forms of insanity may yet prove to be more immediately under the control of direct medical means, than they have been found under the present advance of science.

The safety of these powerful articles of the *materia*

medica having been fully verified under circumstances more justifiable of new modes and hazardous experiments than an institution like this could afford, we have felt it right to employ them in some instances. There is reason to believe, that, in cases of pure maniacal excitement, where preternatural vigilance is a serious and hitherto intractable symptom, the inhalable remedies may have a decided value. At a future period, the results of our attempts, if found worthy of notice, may be communicated to your Board and the public.

If, in former years, I have felt and expressed the sense of satisfaction and grateful acknowledgment in finding myself, from the day of my being called to these responsible duties, surrounded and sustained by intelligent, devoted, and well-tried fellow-laborers in the officers of this institution, it is impossible to refrain, in view of the season of sickness, death, and sorrow of our past year, from repeating my deep sense of recognition of that zeal, patience, and self-denial, which has uniformly prevailed throughout the household.

Mr. Goodhue and Miss Barber, the male and female supervisors, upon whom, with their band of willing assistants, an unheard-of amount of labor, patience, and watching, devolved during so wide-spread sickness, all within the space of less than two months, and my unwearyed medical assistant, Dr. Booth, are entitled to the highest expressions of acknowledgment.

LUTHER V. BELL,  
*Physician and Superintendent.*

M'LEAN ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE, }  
Somerville, Dec. 31, 1847. }

## R E P O R T

OF THE

STEWARD OF THE M'LEAN ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE,  
FOR THE YEAR 1847.

The following are balances of the several accounts:—

		Dollars.	Cents.
Stores	.	14089	30
Fuel	.	1536	45
Stationery	.	40	99
Wages	.	5374	57
Medicine	.	498	92
Contingencies	.	1111	40
Furniture	.	2623	75
Repairs	.	2019	31
Improvements	.	1218	61
Diversions	.	1029	98
Library	.	64	98
New Laundry Building	.	2321	56
Abatement	.	865	28
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		\$32795	10
Salaries	.	4000	00
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		\$36795	10
Deduct Farm, Garden, &c.	.	\$1148	62
„ Abatement	.	865	28
„ Laundry Building	.	2321	56
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		4335	46
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		\$32459	64

Average weekly cost of board to each patient, in the years 1842 to 1847, inclusive: —

Years.	Cost.	Aver. No. of Patients.	Years.	Cost.	Aver. No. of Patients.
1842	\$3.57	143½	1845	\$3.37	149
1843	3.45	131	1846	3.84½	164½
1844	3.48	146	1847	3.75	170

Of the 170 patients in the Asylum, Dec. 31, 1847, —

2 were charged \$2.00 per week.

8	„	„	2.50	per	„
84	„	„	3.00	per	„
14	„	„	3.50	per	„
13	„	„	4.00	per	„
7	„	„	4.50	per	„
25	„	„	5.00	per	„
5	„	„	6.00	per	„
3	„	„	8.00	per	„
5	„	„	10.00	per	„
1	„	„	12.00	per	„
1	„	„	13.00	per	„
1	„	„	15.00	per	„
1	„	„	20.00	per	„

Averaging \$4.10 per week.

The Appleton Fund is now paying \$12.50 per week, distributed among nine recipients, — besides irregular charges of various amounts, to meet particular circumstances. The whole amount charged to this fund, in the year 1847, was \$976.52.

All which is very respectfully submitted by

COLUMBUS TYLER, *Steward.*

M'LEAN ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE, }  
Somerville, Jan. 1, 1848. }

## OFFICERS OF THE INSTITUTION.

1848.

WILLIAM APPLETON, *President.*THEODORE LYMAN, *Vice-President.*HENRY ANDREWS, *Treasurer.*MARCUS MORTON, JUN. *Secretary.*

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#### ERRATUM.

In pp. 33 and 34, for "Commissioner," read *Solicitor*.









Accession no  
6366

Author

Mass. gen. hosp.  
Report of Board  
of trustees. 1848.  
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